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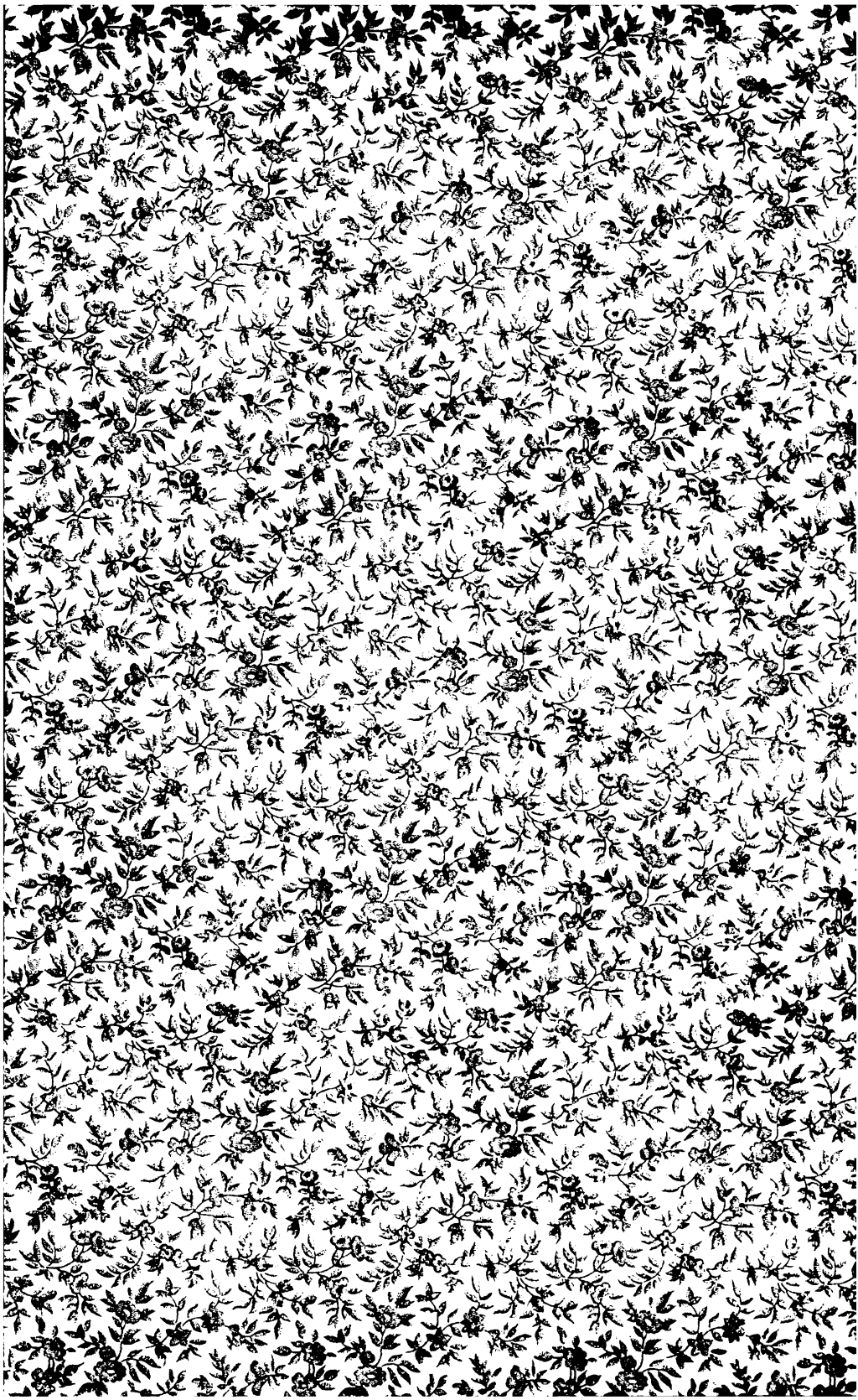
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THE LIFE AND PROFESSIONAL CAREER OF EMMA ABBOTT



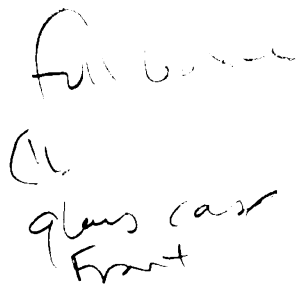


Abbott as Violetta, in Traviata.



Abbott as Violetta, in Traviata.

806



THE LIFE

AND

PROFESSIONAL CAREER

OF

Emma Abbott

BY
SADIE E. MARTIN
(Special Writer for the Press)



L. KIMBALL PRINTING COMPANY
MINNEAPOLIS, MINN
1891

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To Lizzie,

The sister she loved so fondly, and

Alice,

The friend she trusted so implicitly;

WHOSE PRIVILEGE IT WAS TO MINISTER TO HER DURING THE LAST HOURS OF HER LIFE, AND TO HEAR FROM HER LIPS THE SWEET ASSURANCE "NOT AFRAID," THIS HUMBLE RECORD OF THE LIFE OF

America's Sweetest Singer

Is dedicated, by

The Author.

My dear father.

How much pleasure it always gives me to get a letter from your dear hand, and how I thank God for keeping you so strong and well.

You don't know how deeply I love you dear Pa. or how I long to see you again. Just think how many years have passed since we last met. But separation nor time cannot alter my deep love for you.

As to my business affairs, they are "mixed" enough, to thoroughly

perplex any one who relies upon himself, but you know my old belief that God loves & guides me; and I feel perfectly sure that all the troubles I have had, have been sent me as experiences & that they will be proven in the future to have been necessary to my development.

God bless & guard you my own dear Father, is the prayer of your loving daughter

Emma

List of Illustrations.

Abbott as Violetta in Traviata,			*Frontispiece.*
Emma Abbott as Arline in 1882,	Opposite	Page	8
Abbott in '73, '74 and '75,	"	"	16
Mad Scene from Hamlet,	"	"	24
Abbott as Yum Yum in Mikado,	"	"	32
Abbott and Castle, as Romeo and Juliet, Balcony Scene,	"	"	40
Abbott and Castle, as Paul and Virginia,	"	"	48
Abbott as Violetta,	"	"	56
'Tis the Last Rose of Summer,	"	"	60
Abbott as Marguerite in Faust,	"	"	72
Abbott as Queen of Spain, Act I, Ruy Blas,	"	"	80
Emma Abbott as Queen Anne,	"	"	88
Lucia Bridal Gown,	"	"	92
Emma Abbott as Violetta,	"	"	96
Emma Abbott as Anne Boleyn, Last Act, etc.,	"	"	104
Last Act Ruy Blas,	"	"	112
Emma Abbott as Norma,	"	"	116
Abbott and Castle, as Romeo and Juliet,	"	"	120
Emma Abbott as Josephine, the French Empress,	"	"	128
Emma Abbott as Lucia di Lammermoor,	"	"	136
Abbott in Ruy Blas,	"	"	144
Abbott as Arline, in Bohemian Girl,	"	"	148
Abbott in Queen Anne Riding Habit,	"	"	152
Seth Abbott,	"	"	160
Fred M. Abbott,	"	"	168
H. C. Clark, Lizzie Abbott Clark,	"	"	176
Leon Abbott,	"	"	180
George Abbott and Family,	"	"	184



Emma Abbott as Arline in 1882.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

Early Characteristics, ... 15
Emma's First Concert, ... 17
Meets Parepa Rosa, ... 18
Joins Mozart's Chicago Class, ... 18
Sings at Sherman House, Chicago, ... 20
False Tales of Extreme Poverty Corrected, ... 20

CHAPTER II.

Emma Returns West, ... 22
Meets Clara Louise Kellogg at Toledo, ... 23
George Conley's Sad Death and Abbott's Generous Act, . . 24
Joins Dr. Chapin's Church Choir, ... 25
Finds Warm and Influential Friends, ... 26
Money Raised to Send Her Abroad, ... 27

CHAPTER III.

Good-Bye to Home and Friends, ... 29
Rest and Recreation in Switzerland, ... 30
Gains a Reputation for Rowing and Climbing, ... 31
Takes Up Her Studies in Milan in Music, Dramatic Acting, French and Italian, ... 31
Calls on Patti, Secures Her Autograph, Sings for Her and Receives the Diva's Ear Jewels and Letters to Mapleson, . 32
Her Debut in London as Marie, ... 32
Reflections After the Curtain was Rung Down, ... 33
Delights the Florentines and Offends the Milesians, . . . 34

CHAPTER IV.

Her Determination to Retain Her Own Name in Professional Life, 36
Trouble with Gye; "I am Emma Abbott's Husband;" Cancels Her Contract Rather than Sacrifice Principle, . . . 37
Sings at a Fifteen Thousand Dollar Concert, ... 38
Temporary Loss of Voice; Anxious to Give News, the Press Announces Her Charming Voice Forever Silenced, . . . 39

CHAPTER V.

Mr. Wetherell Pronounces Tights All Right if Modestly Worn, 41
Emma Abbott Opera Company Organized, ... 42
Castle and Karl as Mimic Lovers, ... 42

PAGE
Early Repertoire, ... 43
Buys Out Hess; No Shams Permitted, ... 44
Abbott's "Yum Yum," Allen's "Ko-Ko," and Annandale's "Katisha," 45
Crispino or King for a Day, ... 46
Trovatore; Abbott's "Leonora," and Annandale's "Azucena," favorites with Audiences, ... 46
Elegant Costumes for the Opera, ... 47

CHAPTER VI.

POPULAR MEMBERS OF THE COMPANY.

Miss Abbott's Admiration for Pretty Helene Bertram, . 51
The Prima Donna Encouraged Marriage in Her Company; Helene Bertram Becomes Madame Tomasi, ... 51
William Broderick an Artist of Front Rank; Walter Allen. Miss Abbott's Faithful Stage Manager for Many Years, . 51
William McCormack a Favorite with Both Mr. and Mrs. Wetherell; Daniel Consadine also a Favorite, ... 52
Early Repertoire; Liked "Paul and Virginia," and "Martha" Best of All, ... 53
A Labor of Love; Lace for a New "Martha" Dress; "*Alice Is Always Doing Something Nice for Me*," 53

CHAPTER VII.

Incidents of Her Generosity: Her Bestowals for Chatsworth, Johnstown, Louisville and Memphis, ... 54
A Touching Incident in Washington, never Before Published, . 56
A Gift to a Bereaved and Aged Freedman, ... 59
Major Elward's Story, ... 60

CHAPTER VIII.

"Last Rose of Summer" at the Bedside of a Dying Young Man, 62
A Day of Song at a New York City Hospital, ... 64
"Mamma, Mabel and Trixie," 66
Miss Abbott's Generosity and Determination to Save Jennie Smith and Cove Bennett from the Gallows, ... 67
A Dallas, Texas, Physician's Home Rendered Happy, . . . 68
Miss Annie Colgrove Rescued at Long Branch, . . . 69

CHAPTER IX.

Defends Members of Her Profession, ... 71
Abbott's Nashville, Tenn., Sermon, ... 72
Kindness to Members of Her Company when Ill or Unfortunate, 74
Study of the Summer of 1888, ... 77

CHAPTER X.

Charming Costume for "Ruy Blas," 78
Separation from Mr. Wetherell, ... 79
Sad Tidings for Miss Abbott, ... 79
Messages of Condolence; the Sad Journey Eastward; the Burial at Gloucester, ... 80
Returns to the Stage for the Sake of Her Company, ... 83
Domestic Life of Mr. and Mrs. Wetherell, ... 83

CHAPTER XI.

PAGE
The Score of Anne Boleyn is Found in the Stock of a Collector of Old Music in New York, ... 85
Goes Abroad; Arranges for Anne Boleyn Costumes and Properties; Studies Tragedy under Bernhardt, ... 86
Visits Oberammergau and sees the Famous Passion Play, . . 87
Abbott's Love for Paris and Its Environments; Sings at the American Art Club, and is an Honored Guest at Minister Whitelaw Reid's Reception, ... 88
Sings Aria from Traviata, "Red, White and Blue," and "Last Rose of Summer," to Four Thousand Persons, . . . 90
Meets Vert of London, and M. Bourgeoise of Paris, . . . 91

CHAPTER XII.

Most Elegant Costumes ever Made by Worth and Felix, . . . 92
The Lilac Dress, ... 93
Beautiful Ernani, bal Masque, Martha, and Rose of Castile Costumes, ... 95
First Presentation of Anne Boleyn for Miss Abbott's Honored Father, ... 96

CHAPTER XIII.

Opera House Openings 98
Metropolitan Opera House at Grand Forks, Dakota, . . . 100
Manager George Broadhurst's Tribute of Regard, ... 101
Flowers and Fruits for Hospital Sufferers, ... 102
Her Last Christmas Gifts; Uncle Ben Baker's Picture; The Newsies' Thanks, 3,000 Strong, ... 103

CHAPTER XIV.

Love for Her Father; Extracts from Her Letters to Him, . 104
Devotion to Her Mother, ... 106
Love for Children, ... 107
Reverence for Age, ... 108
Remembered the Sabbath Day and Kept It Holy, ... 109
Plans for an Abbott Family Home, ... 110
Three Things She Most Desired, ... 111

CHAPTER XV.

Miss Abbott's Visit to Ogden, ... 113
Opens the New Opera House with Rose of Castile, ... 114
Ogden Standard's Notice of the Performance of the Bohemian Girl and Martha, ... 115
Arrives at Salt Lake City a Very Ill, ... 117
Insists on Singing Ernani, ... 118
"Booked for Paradise," 119
"The Company Will Go On;" "Alice, Dear, Pray," . . . 120
The Scenes at the Death-Bed, ... 121

CHAPTER XVI.

All is Over, and the Members of the Company Exchange Loving Memories of Their Dead Leader, ... 122
Floral Tributes from Loved Ones, ... 123
Telegrams from Friends, ... 125

PAGE
The Sad Return Eastward, ... 126
The Cortege Arrives in Chicago, ... 127
Decorations at Music Hall; Pall Bearers, ... 129
"Lead Kindly Light," 130
An Eloquent Prayer; "I Know That My Redeemer Liveth," . 131
Prof. Swing's Address, ... 132
Dr. Thomas' Remarks, ... 135
The Benediction, ... 138

CHAPTER XVII.

Miss Abbott's Regard for Journalists, ... 139
Excerpts from the Chicago Papers, ... 140
The Demands of the Public; She Sang from Her Soul, . 142
Financial Success, ... 143
Unassuming Charity, ... 144
Tribute from Col. Taylor, an Old Friend of the Family, . 146
Tributes from Minneapolis Press, ... 148
From an Arkansas Paper, ... 150

CHAPTER XVIII.

Words of Esteem from Personal Friends, ... 151
Mr. W. S. B. Matthews, ... 152
Mrs. S. O. Hazlett-Bevis, ... 153
"S. E. M." in Minneapolis Tribune, ... 154
Col. J. W. McKenzie, Kentucky, ... 155
Mr. J. W. Hinds, Wilkesbarre, Pa., ... 156
The Late Mary H. Fiske, ... 157
Mrs. Mary F. Clarke, San Francisco, ... 158
Mr. J. C. Abdill, Kansas City; Salt Lake Tribune, . . 159
Frederic N. Peck, Chicago, ... 160
Mr. and Mrs. Walter Allen, ... 161
Robert J. Jessup, Salt Lake City, ... 162

CHAPTER XIX.

Mrs. Sophia Hoffman, New York, ... 163
Recollection of Horace Greeley's Birthday Reception in 1872, 164
An Atlanta, Ga., Friend, ... 165
James H. Colville, Springfield, ... 166
Words of Admiration from Kansas City Times, ... 167
Col. Ferry, an Old Friend, Calls on Miss Abbott in Salt Lake, 168
Mrs. Forbes, of New Orleans, Writes of Early Days, . . 169
A Despoiler of Graves Deservedly Rebuked, ... 170
Lizzie Abbott Clark's Letter, ... 174
Cheerful When Others Were Sad, ... 177
Her Self-confidence Not Egotism, ... 178

CHAPTER XX.

The Author's Tribute to the Memory of Her Cherished Friend, 180
Sketch of the Abbott Family for Three Generations, . . 183
The Source from which Emma Derived Her Musical Talent; Her Father's Success as a Music Teacher, ... 185
Seth Abbott Moves to Minneapolis, Minn., and Originates Two of That City's Most Beautiful Suburbs, ... 186
Members of Emma Abbott's Immediate Family Now Living, . 187
Wetherell Monument, ... 198

INTRODUCTORY.

IN the early part of the opera-season of 1887 Miss Abbott was visited by a St. Paul journalist, and after faithfully reporting his conversation with her, drew on his imagination for the following statement: "Emma Abbott is writing a book which will contain a history of her life and professional career." The announcement made quite a stir, and caused the prima donna herself to think such a book might be made profitable to her, and interesting to the public. The idea seemed to please Mr. Wetherell, and he said to his wife: "Now you're in for it. The public expect you to write a book, and you must either do so, or break your record."

Ere the week closed she telegraphed me to come to St. Paul, and after greeting she said, "I suppose you have heard about my book?" Replying in the affirmative, I added, "And I shall be impatient to read it." My readers may imagine I was somewhat astonished to hear her say, "My dear, you will not only read, but I expect you to write it."

From that hour our plans were formed for the present work, both promising secrecy that the book might, in the end, prove a surprise to her company. The time during the opera-season was necessarily short, and as during the following summer Miss Abbott wished to devote her time to preparations for a reproduction, in this country, of Norma, the matter was allowed to rest.

The following autumn we recommenced our plans, and Miss Abbott was no more enthusiastic in regard to them than was her husband. Arrangements were made for a meeting when the Abbott company should return from their western tour.

Then came news of Mr. Wetherell's sudden death, and as soon thereafter as Miss Abbott could with delicacy be approached in the matter, she replied: "I cannot talk of the past; my husband's life and my

own were one; in all things we were so closely associated I cannot speak of them. There may come a time when it will be a pleasure to me to recall all the little interesting incidents of my life, but not now, oh, not now."

The time did come, and in October, 1890, Miss Abbott said: "I am ready to begin again upon our long neglected plans, and God grant they may not be as suddenly and sadly interfered with as before."

Notwithstanding the fact that her time was filled with other duties, we found here and there an hour for our work. While standing in the wings awaiting her cue, in her dressing room, or at meal time, she gave me many of the incidents recorded in this work. Then when her Minneapolis week ended, she said, "Go ahead, do your best, and when I return we will plan the rest."

The public knows the sad sequel. Instead of carrying on the work under the inspiration of her sunny presence, I have continued and concluded it in tears.

But that I felt I had no moral right to withhold the history of a life which had been so replete with good and noble deeds, and the many incidents in my exclusive possession, which would if recorded for the public, prove so helpful to girls and women struggling to win for themselves a position in the world—but for this, I would have collected the scattering pages I had prepared and placed them with other souvenirs of my cherished friend, among my treasures of the past.

I decided, however, after consultation with members of her family to complete the biography, and give it to the public; not as I would a work exclusively my own, but as my record of incidents in the life of one of the purest, noblest women of her time, America's Queen of Song.

SADIE E. MARTIN.

NOTE.

Thanks are due Seth Abbott and Lizzie Abbott Clark, the father and sister of my deceased friend; to Madame Sophie Hoffman, of New York, Miss Ellerington, of Jersey City, Mr. N. F. Twing and Miss Vernon, of Minneapolis, for information cheerfully and kindly given me, also to Thors, photographer, of San Francisco, for photos from which most of my engravings are made.

CHAPTER I.



HERE are persons to whom life is simply a state of existence; they come into the world, eat, drink and die; and while society may not be the worse, it is certainly none the better that they have lived. There is no condition of birth or rank, obscurity or publicity, poverty or wealth, to which this fact may be attributed, for a king's son may live threescore years and ten, then die unknown, except to his own household; while the child of humbler origin may attain to the highest round in the ladder of fame, and his name be known in many lands.

Such an one was Emma Abbott; who by means of her energy, and talent, assisted in her own support at an early age; and later supplemented by her womanliness and sweetness of disposition, won a way to the hearts of friends, who placed within her reach aid in laying the foundation of her remarkable career.

While yet a child she displayed the sterling qualities which marked her entire life; qualities, too, that are seldom seen in one nature. Modest, at times painfully so, yet she believed in herself; and was determined to make the world believe in her also;

honest to a degree which won for her at the beginning of her career the title which followed her to its close, "Honest Little Emma"; yet she was politic and shrewd in business transactions, a fact proven by the fortune of which she was possessed at the time of her death. So sensitive was she that an unkind word or unjust criticism would make her heart ache and cause her to burst into tears, yet when duty seemed to call, no matter what the personal sacrifice, Emma Abbott obeyed.

It was this union of tenderness and justice in her character which led to the strict discipline in the company of which Miss Abbott was for many years the head; and yet at the same time caused every member of that company to feel that in her they had a personal friend; one who was as jealous of their interests, of their good name, as of her own. There were no scandals in the Abbott company, because their leader's eye was ever watchful, and because her own pure life and example supplemented by needed advice and reproof, kept each in the path of right.

It was this unusual aggregation of seemingly contradictory qualities which gave to the star the well-balanced mind for which she became noted, and rounded out her nature.

On the night of the ninth of December, 1850, an Abbott concert was given in the city of Chicago, led by Seth Abbott, assisted by Frank Lombard, a Mr. and Mrs. Hillis, and other musical celebrities of the time and locality. On the same night in the same city, in a modest little house on Kinzie Street, Emma Abbott was born, and although heartily welcome was she, the first daughter of the Abbott household, the parents and brothers little dreamed that the tiny stranger was destined to bring them wealth and luxuries during their later years, and to become one of the most famous singers of her time.

Almost as soon as she began to lisp the simplest words, her parents discovered evidence of unusual musical talent, which continually became more apparent, and the father spared no pains in its development. It was in the city of Peoria, at the age of eight years that the embryo star gave her first concert, to an audience composed of her father's friends in his office,



Emma Abbott in 1873, '74 and '75.

and among the listeners were a number who even then predicted for her a future as brilliant as Fortune brought.

One year later Emma assisted her father, or he her, at a concert in Edwards' school-house near Peoria. The concert was given at the request of the coal miners of the section, many of whom were employes of her father. No admittance fee was charged, but the delighted listeners contributed liberally, and the child returned home with her pocket well filled with coins, quarters, half dollars and dollars.

About this time, although so young, Emma began to build air castles for the future, her one longing being to attain fame in her chosen calling. Patti, Kellogg, Parepa Rosa and Christine Nihlsson were in the zenith of their career, singing to crowded houses and immense receipts wherever they appeared, and Emma daily asked herself, "Why may not I?" replying always, "I can and I will."

She attended all musical entertainments given in the locality in which she resided; and had gained information regarding the vocal celebrities of the world, their origin, ambitions, efforts and results.

Soon after Emma's concert a musical convention was held in Peoria by singers who had been trained by Seth Abbott. The Cantata, "Queen Esther," was the piece in rehearsal for the grand concerts on the last two nights of the convention, and when the singers were well versed in their parts, Mr. Abbott secured the services of William B. Bradbury, the composer of the cantata, and one of the greatest instructors and composers of sacred music in the country.

Prof. Bradbury drilled the singers in advanced vocalization, etc., and during an afternoon rehearsal his attention was attracted to the voice of the youngest singer present, a child of about eleven years. He inquired concerning her identity, and when told she was the daughter of Seth Abbott, replied, "That accounts for it. She sings as a lark does, because she can't help it, and she sings beautifully too. There isn't another voice in the room that compares with hers in possibilities."

At the close of an afternoon rehearsal he introduced himself, and asked her to sing for him a selection of her own choosing.

She complied with two or three ballads, among them, "Old Folks at Home," giving at the last the soprano of "Hear Me, Norma," and "I Dreamt that I Dwelt in Marble Halls." The great leader was silent for a moment, then said: "My dear, fortune and fame are sure to be yours, and were I a rich man you should begin preparations to-morrow to go abroad."

Parepa Rosa had heard of the Peoria musical prodigy, as Emma was often denominated, and during the engagement of the former in that city sought out and called upon the family. She listened to the child's singing, gave her voice the usual tests of quality, power, etc., and encouraged her greatly. She also promised future aid, assured the family that in Emma there was "promise of a great artist;" gave them tickets for the evening's performance and left the house.

To the committee in charge of her concert Parepa Rosa said, "Emma Abbott will be heard of in years to come if her life is spared. Of course it will not be under her own name, but I predict for her a famous career, and indeed the idea suggested itself to me to-day that she may become a rival of my own." Partly right and partly wrong; she did become famous, but did not relinquish her own name. Madame Rosa, however, had been called from earth ere Abbott's real preparation for the operatic stage began.

Having heard of a Chicago vocal instructor named Mozart, Emma visited him and told him of her ambition to become a public singer. Her determination coupled with her modesty pleased him, and he afterward said to her, "I saw before you had talked five minutes what you were made of, and before you had sung three, I knew you would accomplish whatever you might undertake." Her voice was not faultless, being at times shrill almost to unpleasantness, but she sang B flat without an effort, holding it as firmly as she would have done F.

She possessed even then a decided style of her own and which she carried throughout her professional career. Mr. G.

W. Felton, present manager of the Western Union Telegraph company in Chicago, was a member of the same class, and with him the little singer sang her first operatic duet, from an old Italian opera, "Oh What Seas; What Mountains." During the time she remained under Mozart's instruction, she sang on several occasions in public; at one of which, a concert in a hall at the corner of State and Washington streets, her singing brought down the house, and won for her a place in the hearts of Chicago music lovers, which she has since retained; and the esteem to which they have testified by crowded houses at her every subsequent performance.

During all her earlier public appearances Emma accompanied herself on the guitar, of which she was a skillful manipulator; and on several occasions when appearing in concert programs, other and better known performers were rendered exceedingly jealous by the repeated calls for "The little girl with her guitar."

Like all singers, journalists, authors and actors, of this country, the young girl's first ambition was to visit New York city; and long did she plan and dream, ere dreams and plans were fulfilled.

When with her father she visited Chicago, they usually stopped at the Sherman House, the proprietor of which was an old friend, and always encouraged the little singer in every possible way. On numerous occasions the spacious dining room, being more roomy than the parlor, was cleared for concert purposes, and there large audiences have listened to concerts given by Seth Abbott and his talented daughter.

Of course no admission fee was asked, the audiences being composed entirely of guests of the house and friends of the proprietor, but the voluntary offerings were far in advance of what an admittance fee would have brought, and some of her enthusiastic admirers betokened their admiration by a contribution of five dollars. Among those who listened to the birdlike trills and warbles of the young girl were scores who have never since failed to hear the prima donna when opportunity occurred.

During one of her early visits to the city, while with her father she was looking about the streets, they met an old friend, who invited them to make his house their home during the rest of their stay. The invitation was accepted, and their host and hostess opened their house for a concert. The result was a plate heaped with coins of gold and silver for the little star.

One of her audience on that occasion was a railroad manager, who said to her, "When you are ready to go to New York come to me, and I'll give you a pass." Thanking him courteously she said, "I'll remember," and when after a few months she had saved enough to provide herself with suitable clothing, and compensation for board during a short stay, she applied for the document, and a round-trip pass was given her.

While in the city she sang for nearly all the prominent vocal teachers, all of whom acknowledged at once her superior talent, but none were sufficiently generous to offer to teach her without extravagant compensation.

Her youth, modesty, charming voice, and her evident determination to adopt the first honorable means of preparing herself for the stage attracted attention and greatly interested those who met her. They spoke words of encouragement, and promised if she should come to the city to prosecute her study to aid her by their influence and as far as practicable with money. Mr. and Mrs. George C. Lake were among her most enthusiastic admirers and offered her a home in their family.

The stories set afloat by unscrupulous reporters and copied by hundreds of papers under the impression they were stating facts regarding the extreme poverty of the Abbott family and Emma's shabby attire are without a shadow of foundation. Her father was not during Emma's girlhood or childhood a wealthy man, neither was he able to send her abroad or even to New York to pursue her musical studies.

But the family never knew discomfort as her father earned sufficient by teaching music, giving concerts, and some small investments to provide the family with a comfortable home,

good food and ordinary attire. Indeed there were comparatively few in those days in the West who did more. Mrs. Abbott was a frugal housewife, possessed of excellent taste and one of those who can make plain attire look well; hence Emma was always neatly and tastefully dressed, as all who knew her personally will testify. The story which has been widely published, that she went barefoot on the streets and even carried her shoes in her hand to one of her early concerts is as false as that of her shabby attire, and justice to her family demands its contradiction.

CHAPTER II.



FTER returning west she engaged in giving music lessons to small classes, singing in public whenever and wherever the way opened, and in 1867 she introduced herself to Clara Louise Kellogg at the close of a performance in Toledo. Miss Kellogg kindly consented to hear her sing, and when she had told of her great desire to study and fit herself for the stage, kindly offered to give her letters to friends of influence in New York; also to intercede in person for her with Errani.

It was the remembrance of Miss Kellogg's kindness in listening, when wearied with a difficult program, to an obscure young girl, and she a stranger,—that led Miss Abbott never to refuse to hear a young girl with ambitions for the future, sing. She was always pleased, too, to find something to commend; something on which she could base encouragement; but she never flattered; her honest opinion was kindly given, if adverse, with sorrow, but she was always true.

In this connection it may be well to contradict the statement which has been widely published, that Miss Kellogg furnished the money with which Miss Abbott pursued her studies in New York. On the contrary, while she never failed to accord to

Miss Kellogg due praise for her kindness, influence and encouragement, which were in their way more than money, she was never under financial obligation to that lady other than for the purchase of a wardrobe in which Emma was to appear for Kellogg's benefit.

The outfit she carried with her to New York contained all that was necessary for the girl's comfort provided by an indulgent father, planned and arranged by a devoted mother, but their circumstances would not permit an opera or concert toilette suitable for the Metropolis. This lack was supplied by Miss Kellogg, who desired Emma to appear in the front of one of the most conspicuous boxes at a Kellogg concert, and advertised in the morning dailies that "Emma Abbott, a young warbler from the west," would so appear, and mentioned her as "Miss Kellogg's protégé." As Emma was an advertised feature of the concert, a drawing card appearing solely for Miss Kellogg's benefit, that lady did not expect her (applying as she was her every dollar to the payment of her tuition) to purchase an elaborate costume for the evening, but supplied it partly from her own wardrobe, and partly by purchase from a New York modiste.

A becoming hat, and dress, opera-cloak, fan, gloves and boots were given her; and her own account of how she promenaded back and forth, then posed, assumed various facial expressions and dramatic attitudes before the mirror, talking to herself all the while, is highly amusing. Said she, "Were I decked in a gown of diamonds set in gold, with mantle of brilliants, I would not feel as gorgeously attired as I did then. I never sing 'Serpolette' in 'Chimes of Normandy,' that I do not recall the amount of primping I did that night. You see, I had never worn quite such finery, although I was provided with suitable dresses for my Western concert tour.

"But I didn't give away the fact that it was anything new to me, after once outside my door. Instead I fancy my airs said plainly, 'This is nothing extraordinary. I am very much at home.'"

The story of the Illinois girl's advent in the city, her ambitions, intentions, and bird-like voice, had been quite generally circulated, and she was at once the object of attention, comment and speculation. At the close of the performance, a friend remarked to her, "I watched the audience rather than the performance, and more opera glasses were directed at your box than at the stage."

For the outlay made by Miss Kellogg, Abbott more than compensated her in the days of the latter's prosperity, graciously acknowledging to Miss Kellogg and to the world her obligation. To her friends the fact was apparent that while Miss Kellogg may not have given public expression to a feeling of jealousy, she was slow to accord to Miss Abbott the praise that was due.

During the season of '82 and '83 George Conley was one of the principals of the Abbott Company, and had contracted for another season, when suddenly for some reason unknown to Abbott or her manager, he broke the contract and signed with the Kellogg Concert Company. Before the season opened Conley met his death by drowning, at the seashore, leaving destitute an aged mother who for years had been dependent upon him.

The sad event and the circumstances attendant upon his death, the loneliness and dependent condition of the mother, were uppermost in Miss Abbott's mind; and forgetting the broken contract, and the expense and annoyance it had cost her, remembering only that for two years Conley had served her faithfully and well; she headed a paper with a munificent subscription, and calling a carriage visited her personal friends in the city, asking from them a contribution for the mother bereft at once of son and support. She appealed to none in vain, and in one forenoon secured a handsome sum which by way of courtesy she forwarded through Miss Kellogg.

No law required the latter to say to Mrs. Conley or to the public, that the money was raised by a sister artist, but it would have been at least a graceful deed. Miss Abbott never



Emma Abbott in "Mad Scene" from Hamlet.

doubted that Mrs. Conley received the money, but if the lady was made aware of the fact that Abbott headed the subscription, and in person solicited the remainder, she never signified such knowledge by word or line. Of this incident Miss Abbott said a few months before her death, "I have always thought it strange that Miss Kellogg should seem to claim the credit of raising that subscription, and it certainly did seem so; for if Mrs. Conley had been notified of the origin of the subscription, I am quite sure she would have indicated such knowledge by a message of some kind. Still," said she, "I care only because I am sorry to believe that Clara Louise entertains for me other than the kindest feeling."

In the early days of her operatic career the New York critics were especially severe in their comments on Abbott's vocal and dramatic work. Among the number was Eli Perkins, and many of Miss Abbott's friends gave Miss Kellogg credit for sharpening the Perkins pencil, and that his newspaper articles reflected her opinions rather than his own.

The ridiculous part of the affair was, that while the critics through the press declared that "Abbott cannot sing," she was appearing nightly to crowded houses. Indeed the New York engagement was a great financial success. Abbott laughingly used to say, "Either the New Yorkers possessed horrid taste, and were unable to distinguish between good work and poor, or else the critics were unduly harsh and unjust in their reviews of my singing. Now, which was it?"

Soon after Emma took up her studies in New York city she was engaged as soprano in the choir of Dr. Chapin's church of the Divine Paternity. While acting in this capacity she formed the acquaintance of several families of social and financial prominence; who, attracted by her ingenuousness, determination and hopeful disposition, volunteered to her their friendship; which she ever after retained. Among these were Horace

NOTE.—The author has no desire to do Miss Kellogg the slightest injustice, but loving Abbott as a sister, she cannot refrain from the mention of what seems to her a tendency to withhold from a generous woman that which is her due, or at least a lack of courtesy from one artist toward another.

Greely, Matt. Carpenter, George Hoffman, C. P. Huntington, Henry Ward Beecher, Col. Robt. G. Ingersoll, and others. Her home was in the family of Mr. George C. Lake (then a millionaire merchant), the members of which became so fond of her that when she left them to go abroad they relinquished their right to her only temporarily; and afterward fitted up a suite of apartments which were termed the "Abbott suite." Here the prima donna and her husband made their home until the sad death of Mr. Lake, after which the family changed their residence.

Errani was at that time the best vocal instructor in America, and Emma became his pupil. He was exceedingly proud of her, took great interest in her advancement, and never lost an opportunity to introduce her to the musical talent of the city. He also arranged on several occasions for her public appearance in conjunction with the best local performers.

While pursuing her studies under Errani, Emma sang on four occasions with Ole Bull, the world renowned violinist; and assisted Miss Kellogg at a concert at Harlem. On this occasion five hundred New Yorkers, admirers of the Illinois songstress, visited Harlem, and at every appearance their favorite was enthusiastically cheered and persistently recalled. Flowers had been ordered, and the singer was fairly pelted with bouquets, while a shower of single roses of every color fell around her.

This was one of the triumphs the memory of which lasted as long as she lived, and she often remarked, "I shall always keep a corner of my heart sacred to the memory of the dear friends who went up to Harlem that night to testify to their appreciation of my efforts," and added with a sigh, "Ah, me! so many of that dear company have passed on to the Great Beyond. If I am permitted to sing in Heaven perhaps they will be glad to welcome me there, too."

Not many weeks after her Harlem appearance, Emma sang at a concert given for a Hebrew charity fund. Selina Dolaro (who died in '89) also appeared on the program; and although

she had just finished her studies under Marchesi for the Parisian Opera stage, she acknowledged the young student her peer. A friendship soon sprang up between them, and in the intervals occupied by other numbers, Emma plied the young Jewess with inquiries regarding the work of a student abroad, their mode of life, etc., and she left the concert hall that night mentally "booked" for a course of study abroad.

The proceeds of the evening were more than two thousand dollars. Knowing her circumstances, and her desires for the future, three wealthy Hebrew merchants of the city sent her their personal checks for a hundred dollars each in token of appreciation of her kindness in singing for the charity. She sent courteous notes of thanks and acknowledgement, but begged permission to add the sum, $300, to the fund already raised.

Even prior to the commencement of her studies in New York, Emma had determined upon going abroad to complete her musical education. How this was to be accomplished she had no idea, still her purpose was fixed, and her faith that "All things come to him who waits," implicit.

As she progressed in her studies under Errani, her friends of Dr. Chapin's church became satisfied that their protégé was the possessor of remarkable talent, and the wonderful application, enthusiasm and hopefulness with which she studied convinced them that with proper advantages, she might attain a high position in the musical world.

The ladies of the church decided upon a benefit fund and started a subscription for that purpose, which soon reached the sum of ten thousand dollars. Of this amount Messrs. Greely, Beecher, Lake, Huntington, Hoffman and Carpenter, gave about one-half.

Eugene Wetherell also contributed liberally to the fund which was to eventually return to him many hundred fold; giving in his case being a literal casting of bread upon the waters which should return after many days.

All the gentlemen before mentioned had great faith in the young Western girl. At one time Horace Greely said to her,

"We always enjoy melody and sunshine in your presence, the melody of your charming voice, and the sunshine of your disposition."

On the occasion of her departure, Rev. Beecher remarked, "I have but one fear for you, my dear, and that is not failure in the fulfillment of your ambition, nor for your virtue; but I do fear that your ambition exceeds your strength, and that when you reach the goal of your heart's desires, you will find yourself broken down."

CHAPTER III.



HE few days before she sailed for Europe were made pleasant by a round of calls and visits, in which she alternated as giver and recipient. There were many tributes paid to her talent, heartfelt kindnesses, and wishes for a pleasant voyage, assurances of a bright future, souvenirs of love, and keepsakes, which were useful, and would at the same time serve as reminders of friendship. There were dainty and necessary accessories to her wardrobe, gloves, handkerchiefs, slippers; a comfortable *négligé* gown; warm wrap for chilly mornings, a protector for the throat and lungs, all provided by generous hands and warm hearts.

While the enthusiasm which characterized all her later undertakings rendered her anxious for the day of departure, her sensitive nature was stirred at thought of taking up her work in a strange land, in the midst of strange environments; and she realized fully the importance and difficulties of the step she was about to take. She knew then, as afterward, that bright futures do not come to mortals, but are striven for and bought at cost of personal sacrifice.

* * * The good-byes have been spoken; and the young girl is leaving behind her home, parents, friends, all she held dear save voice and ambition. Going to her destiny. What will it be? Will the gods smile or will they darkly frown? Will success reward her hours of study, her sacrifices, and those made by her friends in her behalf? Only God knows, but her faith in Him is implicit. She has seen dark hours, but her hopeful spirit never failed to discern the silver lining to the darkest cloud. * * *

After a fortnight's rest in Switzerland, drinking in, as it were, inspiration from the harmony of nature, she will begin the study which is either to make for her a name and place with the world's great singers, or prove her ambitions vain, her endeavors fruitless.

While devoting herself to the study of music in New York, her versatile tastes led her to seek other accomplishments, some of which would be needful in her profession, others necessary to the development of her physical strength; hence she had been a pupil at the natatorium, fencing class, riding and rowing schools, and had taken lessons on the drum of one of the best drummers in New York city. More than one moonlight evening had found her one of a boating party on Long Island Sound, and in sculling she had become expert. Her figure was slight, but among her acquaintances she had become noted for her strength. Lithe of limb, quick as a kitten, she could mount a horse like a farmer's daughter, and run like a professional.

While stopping under the chaperonage of a friend at Lake Geneva, in Switzerland, she attracted the notice of a party of twelve English ladies, who like herself were on a tour of recreation, and who having been bred to out-of-door sports, spent hours each day in rowing, riding, hunting, etc. Finally Emma was challenged by one of the party to a boat race and promptly accepted. The guests of the hotel were much interested in the affair, and at the time set for the trial the pretty little lake was well dotted with boats containing spectators.

When the signal was given Emma shot ahead of the English

lady a boat-length, and maintained her lead to the finish. All though none were more lavish in praise of her skillful management of the oars than her English friends, each one of the party challenged her until the twelve were beaten.

This little affair proved quite an advertisement for the little American stranger, and when she reached Milan the story of her boat races had preceded her. With the same party of ladies she made an ascent of the Alps, and reached a point eighteen feet higher than that ever before attained except by her guide companion. The spirit of courage which inspired this attempt was characteristic of the woman as of the child, not however resulting always in reckless daring as in this case, but leading her to attempt difficult things, assured of her ability to conquer. Indeed "Conquer or die" was her motto. In many an autograph album and on souvenir bangles of gold are inscribed in her handwriting or *fac simile* these words, quoted from a song her father sang in concerts years before she was born, and afterward when he assisted in her Illinois concerts. The refrain, "Conquer or Die," seemed an appropriate motto for one with so many obstacles to overcome, and yet possessed of such strength of purpose.

Emma studied in Milan for some months, then went to Paris as the pupil of Marchesi and Wartel in vocalization and Charles Fechter in dramatic acting. Here too it became necessary to engage a teacher of languages, as French is the society language of the continent and Italian is indispensable in opera. German was taken later, when less time was necessary for other matters.

Like her subsequent life every hour was filled, and to one with less self-control such a strain would have proven disastrous. But she possessed then as later, the happy faculty of closing her eyes and mind at the same time; and of becoming as completely absorbed in a recreative role as in her work.

While Emma was studying in Paris, Patti sang an engagement there, and the young student went night after night to hear her sing. She also sought an introduction, but was repulsed and told that Mme. Patti could not be seen. Finally

she decided to call at the hotel, and her modest manners quite won the doorkeeper of the diva's apartments, and the visitor assured him that she had a secret for his mistress.

Patti was not in one of her sunny moods on that occasion, and as her little visitor entered she was greeted by a frown. Nothing daunted she drew from her pocket an ordinary paper fan, and said, "Mme. Patti, will you please to write your name there?" The great singer snatched a pen from the table and wrote her name in the place indicated, and returned the fan to its owner with a half impatient sigh.

Emma received it with a courtesy and kissed the autograph passionately; then said, "I can sing a little, and am studying very hard. May I sing just a few notes for you?" Patti nodded assent, and her visitor began. First, four lines of a simple ballad, then snatches from Italian songs, and Patti's heart was won. "Sing more, something else," she said, and the performer launched into operatic snatches, concluding with "Last Rose of Summer."

"Here, take these as my thank-offerings," said Patti, and took from her ears a pair of exquisite diamonds. Then taking her pen in a different spirit from that which inspired her autograph, she wrote a letter to Mapleson heartily commending the stranger, asserting that her voice possessed extraordinary possibilities, and urged the impressario to find a place for her wonderful talent.

The letter concluded and placed in her visitor's hand, she questioned her in a kindly way regarding her past, her plans for the future, and urged her if at any time she needed money or influence to call upon her. The young girl thanked her hostess kindly, kissed her hand and her cheek, and departed. The fan and ear-jewels are among the treasures sacredly kept by the prima donna, and to intimate friends she told the story of how they came into her possession.

Her debut was made as Marie in "Daughter of the Regiment," at Convent Garden Theater, London, and her singing and drumming set Londoners wild. Not only were seats held



Abbott as Yum Yum in Mikado.

and sold at a premium, but aisles and foyer were packed to the doors, and a shower of coins and flowers fell at the fair *debutante's* feet, when she responded to a call before the curtain. *Encore* followed *encore*, and yet the audience was not satisfied. Finally a voice in the pit called, "Trot out the little one with her drum." When she appeared, with drumsticks beating the spirited air, her head inclined coquettishly to one side, and her feet encased in military boots, marching with the precision of one of the "Old Guard," the admiration of the house found vent in shouts. Back and forth she marched in front of the "drop," turning at the end of the stage and recrossing at least a dozen times.

The Londoners were extremely kind to her, and although the critics found much to condemn, they also found much to commend, and at the close of the first week she felt compensated for all her study and self denial. Let her own words tell the story of her first night's triumph.

"The crowds, applause and encores rather dazed me (although I was not a victim of stage fright), and I went through the first half of the performance almost unconsciously. Then I warmed up to business, threw my soul into the part, and I was no longer Abbott the *debutante*, striving to gain a footing on the operatic stage, but *Marie*, the petted child of the soldiers, following the French flag to victory. I was a patriot, and when I sang the famous 'Ode to France' I was fairly inspired.

"When the curtain was rung down, the house became dark and quiet; and no sound reached my ears save the call of one of the chorus to another, 'Are you ready to go?' the reaction came to me. I asked myself, 'Emma, is this really you? Are you singing in London? Is it a dream or are your fond hopes fulfilled?' Oh, dear! how homesick I was for a few minutes! I cried because I was so far from home, because none who loved me were near to see that I had tried to fulfil their anticipations. I would have given more just then to see pa and ma, and take my sister in my arms, than for the praise of all London."

Of the costume worn as Marie she was very fond, and carefully preserved it intact. The Zouave jacket, cap, boots and brightly trimmed short skirt, were particularly becoming to her then girlish figure, and accorded well with the coquettish, saucy air with which she invested the *role.*

Abbott's next operatic success was in Florence, and so great was the delight of the Florentines with her acting and singing, it seemed as if the program would never end. On one number she was recalled twelve times, and of this incident she said, "The last time I could but just gasp, but the audience cheered as loudly as if I were in perfect voice."

Only once did she give offence to a foreign audience, and that was by the interpolation of "Nearer My God to Thee," in "La Sonnambula," at Milan. At this the Milesians were greatly incensed, hissed, and uttered violent threats; but were at last pacified by the manager, who came before the curtain and assured the audience that the singer had no intention of offending, and humbly begged the pardon of her hearers for the seeming disregard of the time and place. The curtain then rose, not on the next act, but on the singer alone; who in her most gracious manner warbled several old Italian love songs, and snatches of favorite Italian operas, bowing and kissing her hands to the ladies present; and in this way she soon gained a hold on her listeners stronger even than she had before the trouble.

When she felt that she had made sufficient amends for her transgression, the opera was continued, and her every appearance warmly cheered. In recalling the incident, she laughingly remarked, "I thought I was in for it, and visions of all the bloody scenes of which I had read and heard as occurring in fair Italy passed before me. I just said to myself, 'Em', you have had a close call; learn from this to be sure your interpolations are suited to the locality in which you sing, even though they fail to accord perfectly with what goes before and comes after.'"

On one occasion in Paris after the curtain had been rung

down on the first act of "Linda di Chamouni," the prima donna was called before the curtain and the audience called loudly for a song. She responded with *The Marseillaise.* The American minister with a party of friends being present in a box, an influential French politician suggested as a tribute to them, "The Red, White and Blue," and at its close there was a universal call for "Star Spangled Banner." The singer gave all four stanzas with true patriotic fervor; but the house was not satisfied. "Home, Sweet Home," was loudly called for, then "Last Rose of Summer." By this time managerial patience was nearly exhausted; the stage being set and all but the star ready for act II. She darted through the wings into her dressing room, made a lightning change, and in six minutes was again on the stage ready to proceed with her part.

CHAPTER IV.



EFORE going to London Miss Abbott was asked regarding the name under which she intended entering the profession. "I shall assume no name," said she, "but retain my own." Her teacher remonstrated with her, saying that with a euphonious title, French or Italian, she might win an enviable position in opera, but as plain Emma Abbott, *never!*

Her reply was, "My good father and mother have found the name good enough for all social and business purposes; I came by it honestly, and so far as my family are concerned it has never known a stain; I am proud of it, and if I ever attain a reputation or fame in my profession it will be as plain, unvarnished Emma Abbott; rather than under some jaw-breaking, ear-splitting *nom du theatre.*"

The Mapleson-Abbott contract was for five years, but almost from the first Miss Abbott felt somewhat dissatisfied, and fearful that something would occur to bring about a cancellation. Not that she submitted ungraciously to authority; her life had already been too well disciplined for that, but Mapleson was autocratic, tyrannical, and gave his orders like a monarch. Indeed his opinion was law, and all who held the opposite lacked sense. His sarcasm was at times almost unendurable.

The first unpleasantness between Miss Abbott and himself was in regard to the interpolation of a song in one of her operas. Miss Abbott considered it fit only for the variety stage and positively declined to sing it. It was a pet idea of Mapleson's, and would have drawn a heavy gallery audience; but as the contract was for Italian opera he could not compel her to accede to his request. She stated her objections in ladylike terms, and when she had concluded, Mapleson remarked, "If you are so good, so very good, you should have taken the veil, and ought to be Mother Superior in some nunnery instead of trying to acquire a position in opera." Soon after this came the tilt with Gye, who was Mapleson's stage manager.

Miss Abbott became Mrs. Wetherell in 1875 while singing in London. Mr. Wetherell always declared he fell in love with Abbott's voice before he ever saw her face, and that from the hour he first heard her sing he determined to make her his wife. Their marriage was kept a secret from all but the Abbott household for nearly two years, and the secret would have been longer maintained had it not been for managerial insolence.

Miss Abbott possessed peculiar and decided opinions regarding right and wrong, and when once fixed naught could move her. She knew that the usual character given to Camille was that of a wanton who was wicked simply because she loved sin; and she despised the role. Finally she was cast for Violetta in Traviata—the musical version of Camille—and emphatically refused to appear in the part. Her manager stormed and insisted, she coolly but persistently refused, and when at last managerial stubbornness became too marked appealed to her friend Wetherell who interposed in her behalf.

"Pray what have you to say regarding the matter, you Yankee upstart," said the angry manager. "Simply this, sir," replied the young New Yorker; "I am Emma Abbott's husband; and when she says to you she will not, I say to you she shall not." This refusal to sing a role she considered immoral cost the singer a three years' contract she had signed, but, although not so intended, it proved a bit of valuable advertising, and

won for her hundreds of friends who did not hesitate to commend in the highest terms a young woman who, in the beginning of her career, voluntarily sacrificed money rather than principle. Years after "Traviata" became a part of Miss Abbott's *repertoire*, but her Violetta was always the woman who would be good, who appealed to society to aid her, and who sacrificed her love to save a heart-broken father from despair.

Miss Abbott returned to New York soon after the cancellation of her engagement with Mapleson; and although her friends were greatly surprised at the revelation brought about by her dispute with that gentleman, that she had been for two years a wife; she was warmly received, and the church parish which had so kindly aided her, tendered her a grand social reception. They were delighted, too, at the stand she had made for principle, although regretting, of course, the fact that she was thereby a financial loser.

Arrangements were at once made for a concert for the benefit of the parish poor, and the church missions, and although tickets were placed at ten dollars each, the proceeds of the entertainment reached fifteen thousand dollars. This proved a great advertisement, and within a fortnight the prima donna received numerous flattering offers from managers both in Europe and America.

The hopeful little woman had occasional periods of anxiety, for the cancellation of her European engagement was a sad blow to her. But the alternative was a sacrifice of principle, and to that she would not submit. Anxiety was succeeded by insomnia and this supplemented by a severe cold, resulted in a temporary paralysis of the vocal chords, and she awoke one morning, about six weeks after her return to New York, unable to speak aloud. Her husband was greatly alarmed, and her immediate friends feared the loss of voice might prove permanent. The press eager then as now for the latest, whether false or true, greatly exaggerated her bronchial affection and the telegram "*Abbott will sing no more*," was sent east, west, north and south. The most skillful treatment New York boasted

was volunteered her, and in a fortnight the disease yielded. Two weeks later not a vestige of the trouble remained, and the star of hope again beamed brightly.

The story that Miss Abbott awoke one morning in London moneyless and voiceless and in her desperation cabled her lover to come at once, then went to the Baroness Rothschild to beg assistance in securing medical treatment until the arrival of her lover, is a very romantic one, but like many romances contains no element of truth.

That Mr. Wetherell visited his sweetheart on several occasions during her stay abroad, is true. That Baroness Rothschild generously betokened her admiration of the young girl student is also true, but neither event is in any way associated with her loss of voice, and the assertion that Miss Abbott's enforced silence lasted for months, that the best medical talent in Europe failed to aid in any degree her recovery, is without foundation.

In fact Miss Abbott suffered but one serious attack during all her study abroad, and that was of short duration. She was wonderfully free from attacks of sore throat, hoarseness, etc., which are the usual accompaniments of musical study and vocal practice.

At a soiree given by the pupils of Marchesi, Emma's voice and acting attracted the attention of Baroness Rothschild, and she sought an introduction which was brought about through a Mrs. Perkins, a mutual friend and charming, accomplished lady, who still resides in Paris, and was to the last, one of the singer's favorite friends.

On the day following the soiree the Baroness called on the girl student, and invited her to sing at the Rothschild home to a few invited guests. Among the latter were a daughter of Queen Victoria, Lord Beaconsfield, and other celebrities, most of them Londoners visiting the French capital.

So pleased were the guests and their distinguished hostess with the singing of the young American girl that at her departure the Baroness placed within her hand a check for two

thousand francs. A week later she called again on the young student, presented her with a diamond necklace of great value, and extended the freedom of her home, asking the singer to brighten it with her presence as often as her duties would permit; indeed, to consider it a home which she was free to enter whenever so inclined.

About this time Miss Abott was attacked by the single spell of hoarseness before mentioned, and her new friend the Baroness in great alarm urged her to consult one of the most noted of Parisian physicians, offering to defray the expense of consultation and treatment. For a few days her case did seem serious, but true to her sunny nature Emma never lost heart.

Of this affliction she said, "I believe my Heavenly Father intended me to sing my way through the world, and I have faith in His purpose to restore my voice." Restoration came soon, under skillful treatment, although reports place this interval of silence at months.



Abbott and Castle as Romeo and Juliet.—Balcony Scene

CHAPTER V.



HE story that the first Mapleson-Abbott "tilt" was because the latter refused to wear "tights" upon which her manager insisted, is untrue. She did not especially object to tights. During an interview with the star on the occasion of her last presentation of her double bill, Masked Ball and "Mad Scene from Hamlet," she said, "I never would have worn tights had my husband objected, but he did not, except on account of their tendency to impede circulation. Mr. Wetherell always maintained that a woman may wear tights as modestly as her ordinary attire, while others are suggestive in manner no matter how modest their apparel.

"I noticed however that when I first donned them he used frequently to happen around in the foyer and gallery, and had he ever heard evil remarks concerning me would have stricken from my repertoire all roles that necessitated costuming in tights. This is one of the beauties of being managed by one's own husband. Another man would have consulted only his purse, and have been indifferent regarding what was said of his star. Indeed, I think some managers rather relish mean speeches as a means of advertising."

At the conclusion of her engagement with Mapleson, Abbott sang one year at the head of a concert troupe, and the next year was organized The Abbott English Opera Co. with Hess as manager and Eugene Wetherell as assistant manager. With her were Madame Zelda Seguin and husband; the former as contralto, the latter as tenor. After the death of her husband, Mme. Seguin married Wallace, but remained a year longer with Abbott.

Then came Castle, Tom Karl, and Taglipietra; the latter from Mapleson's Italian opera company, and both of the former noted as connected with the famous production of Paul and Virginia, and Romeo and Juliet. Stories of the "Abbott kiss," have been told the world over, and Abbott's Mikado was famous for the same osculatory exercises between Koko and Yum Yum.

Both Castle and Karl were in their palmy days when singing the lover to Abbott's sweetheart; and although neither they nor yet the prima donna, had attained the finished vocalization of later years, they never have afforded greater actual pleasure to their large audiences, than when the boys were the envy of half the beaux of the United States, and Abbott the idol of all the belles.

Although at the outset the financial means at Wetherell's command were sufficient for ordinary mercantile transactions even in the metropolis, they were meager for the new undertaking. Miss Abbott never made the very common mistake of endeavoring to render her own talent more conspicuous by employing poor support, and her pay roll at the beginning was a heavy one.

She gained the confidence of the public, of those who assisted her financially, and every member of her company, by discharging her obligations when due; although she was at times compelled to borrow again to do so; and discharge of obligations often meant transference of the same. To her honor be it said that no pay day ever passed, on which every member of her company was not paid in full; a record which few theatrical or operatic organizations can boast.

The pleasing voice and manners of the operatic star, and her sympathetic nature seemed at once to attract towards her the hearts of the public. She was from the first very popular, and after the first year there were many who watched, waited and longed for her annual appearance, as for that of an old friend.

Especially was this true of the West, Northwest and South, where Miss Abbott became almost the idol of her audiences. On the occasion of her first visit to San Francisco she received ten thousand dollars as the first week's profits, and during an engagement of sixteen nights the standing-room sign was displayed at every performance. All along the Pacific coast the company met the same flattering receptions, and it was a matter of regret that they did not visit the Western Slope each succeeding year. The trip, or part of it was distasteful to Miss Abbott, and although she received many excellent guarantees accepted no other, until the visit during which Mr. Wetherell died.

In its earliest days the company's repertoire was not a large one, but comprised the most popular operas. These were Daughter of the Regiment, Romeo and Juliet, Paul and Virginia, Chimes of Normandy, Bohemian Girl, Sonnambula. Martha and Traviata. Each year, however, new operas were added, and while the company was rehearsed in the new until they reached the point of public presentation, they were also reviewed in the older operas; new business added, popular songs interpolated, etc., so that if by request they wished to change a weeks' repertoire they were able to do so without embarrassment, and at the same time give their audiences something new; not always the time-worn opera in a stereotyped manner.

As soon as one season's work ended, Miss Abbott was off for Europe; consulting authorities regarding additions to her repertoire, and making selections therefor. This question decided, she turned her attention to staging and costuming the same, perfecting arrangements for properties, and consulting Worth and Felix regarding suitable styles, materials, etc., not only

for her own attire but for that of every member of her company, so that when she returned to this country she knew every detail connected with the presentation of her newly selected operas.

When all the costumes and properties which were to be purchased abroad were decided upon, and work thereon had begun, the songbird settled down to a most rigid course of study and drill under the best musical and dramatic teachers of the old world. Thus while others of her profession were recreating at Long Branch, Saratoga, and Newport, or making a pleasure tour of the continent, Emma Abbott might always have been found absorbed in planning for her next season's appearance, or engaged in the most enthusiastic and earnest study.

To the practice of study during the time enjoyed by other singers as vacations, may be attributed the wonderful advancement made by Abbott and her company, while others were content with the same old repertoire year after year with no visible improvement.

When Abbott bought out Hess' interest in the company of which she was the head, she became possessed also of the costumes of the old company. These were used only while economy demanded, then were succeeded by the first of those charming and tasteful costumes for which the prima donna and her associates were noted.

She abhorred sham wherever it appeared, and no shams were permitted on the Abbott stage or in the dressing rooms. Of course there was always the "makeup," without which a stage presentation is impossible, but there was none of the shabby-genteel, gold-and-silver-paper-splendor, or glazed muslin elegance which usually characterizes the wardrobe of opera chorus singers.

As her means increased, she expended more and more in costuming her operas elegantly, and during the last five years no company, either in this country or Europe, has been so elegantly or expensively costumed. In addition to their elegance, they were always historically correct; a fact which often caused the designer weeks of research, and necessitated great expense.

There were few fines levied upon members of the Abbott company, and not one ever imposed or paid without her full knowledge of the entire affair in detail. This fact proves the saying that that company is best disciplined which has the least discipline.

Miss Abbott had an eye on every department of her business. While she employed business and stage managers, she placed rather than left her affairs in their hands, and she knew at all times exactly how her business stood. She personally superintended all rehearsals, dictated the costumes, properties, etc., and yet never seemed to interfere with the duties she assigned to others, nor did she without excellent reasons release any one from the responsibilities laid upon him.

When "The Mikado" was first presented in London, Abbott, after witnessing two or three performances, decided that it would catch the American taste for comic opera, and at once made preparation to secure the exclusive American rights. In this, however, she was disappointed, as Sydney Rosenfield and one or two others had anticipated her, and were already rehearsing the opera in New York and Chicago.

On the principle that a half loaf is better than none, she concluded arrangements for its production, and after spending much money and time in making costumes, etc., correct, she returned and began rehearsals, and although by the time the Abbott company began their season, Mikado had been murdered by a score of methods, no presentation equaled that of the Abbott company, either in splendor of stage setting, daintiness of costumes, or vocalization. Abbott, with her plump figure, made an ideal Yum Yum; Montegriffo sang and acted the love-sick Nanki-poo to perfection; Walter Allen was positively the funniest Koko ever seen (he sang a creation of his own); and if all Japan *could* reveal an uglier Katisha than Lizzie Annandale's creation, it certainly didn't.

Just at that time "Erminie" became the rage; and although it was not considered of sufficient merit to hold a place in the company's repertoire, the gem of the opera, the "Lullaby Song," was often interpolated in their rendering of the Mi-

kado. For several seasons, after other companies had been compelled to shelve Mikado on account of its non-drawing qualities, wherever the Abbott company opened for a week it was by request presented at least once during the engagement.

As presented by the Abbott company "Crispino, or King for a Day," was received with great applause, and the transition from Gretchen, the market woman, to queen, was capitally portrayed by the star. Arrayed in a gown of rose-colored crepe and black velvet, the latter revealing in all their beauty her plump arms and shoulders, with magnificent gems glittering at throat, wrist, ears, on her fingers, and in her hair; she looked every inch the Queen she played. Her portrayal of disgust at being compelled to part with all this splendor was irresistibly funny. The exhausting nature of the ballet the presentation imposed upon Miss Annandale, was the chief reason of the withdrawal from the stage.

Abbott's Leonora and Annandale's Azucena became famous everywhere, and no week's engagement ever passed without one presentation of Trovatore, and it usually occurred on Thursday night. The costumes purchased for the Trovatore of '90 and '91 were the most magnificent ever worn in that opera, and in style were exact reproductions of the Fifteenth century. A mantle known as the Surprise, was designed and made by Worth; and the material—a heavy white brocade—woven at Lyons, especially for that purpose. The mantle was fitted to the figure like a princess dress, with a long court train over which was a circular cape reaching the knees. It was lined throughout with heavy corn-colored satin, and edged by a deep border of ostrich tips of the same shade. A magnificent rope and tassels of pearl and gold beads fastened the mantle at the throat and hung to the knees. Strings of pearls and gold-lined beads hung from the throat to the knees, imparting an effect at once unique and brilliant.

The gown worn with this mantle was a white brocade combined with corn-colored velvet, and trimmed to match the wrap. Another Trovatore gown was of lemon yellow satin beautifully

embroidered in a wheat design in tiny jet beads. The mourning costume worn while Manrico is in prison is of black brocade velvet, heavily jetted, and with this dress is worn one of the lace mantillas which Spanish dames affect so gracefully. The Trovatore "character gown" or the one bearing the colors and crest of the House of Trovatore is the Lion dress of crimson, white, black and gold, in satin and velvet. The petticoat is of red with arabesque design in black and gold. The skirt and train proper is of white satin with border of gold embroidery, and loops high on the left side to disclose an immense lion rampant. The corsage is low, with antique sleeves, on each of which is a lion rampant. This is one of the most gorgeous of the entire Abbott wardrobe.

Mr. Wetherell always watched anxiously from the front, the presentation of a new opera; and the curtain no sooner rang down on the first act than he was behind the scenes making suggestions for some needed improvement. At the initial performance of a new opera some years since the star's role required that she appear in the dress of a small boy with broad knee trousers, ruffled shirt front, jacket, Kossuth hat and feather, and armed with bow and arrow. It was her first appearance in boys' clothes, and it is not surprising that one accustomed to either massive trains, peasant costumes, or tights, with all the feminine paraphernalia which usually accompanies the latter, should feel somewhat awkward in the new attire, and her embarrassment was decidedly apparent from the front.

At the conclusion of the first act the fond husband and manager flew to his wife's dressing room with, "For mercy's sake, Em, brace up and drop the endeavor to get behind yourself." "Oh, 'Gene," was the plaintive reply, "I feel so awkward; just look," and she bent forward to inspect her broad trousers. "They are long the wrong way, and when I courtesy I haven't a skirt to lift or even a tunic of lace to manipulate." Mr. Wetherell dived deep into the mysteries of a huge trunk, bringing out a court mantle and sword, which he adjusted to his own satisfaction and the star's comfort before the curtain again rose.

CHAPTER VI.



N the list of those who have served at different times as principals of the Abbott Opera Company are the familiar names of Castle, Tom Karl, Fabrini, Appleby, Richard Karl and Signor Michelena, tenors; Broderick, Conley, Tagliepietra, Campebello and Walter Allen, bassos; William Pruette, baritone; Zelda Seguin, Myrell, and Lizzie Annandale, contraltos; Madame Rosewald, Marie Hindel, Laura Belini, Nina Bertini, Helene Bertram and Myra Mirella, sopranos.

Of those serving longest, and becoming most popular on account of association with the prima donna in her most brilliant performances aad favorite roles are Castle, Tom Karl, Pruette, Broderick, Michelena and Annandale. As noted elsewhere, Castle and Tom Karl became popular in connection with the production of Romeo and Juliet, and Paul and Virginia. Pruette is one of the finest baritones in the country, and his Plunkett in "Martha" is one of the most enjoyable roles in English opera. Indeed, it has never been equalled in this country.

Signor Michelena sang the lover to Abbott's prettiest sweethearts, and his handsome face and figure are excelled only by



Abbott and Castle as Paul and Virginia.

his magnificent voice. Tamagno has been called the finest tenor Americans have ever heard; but while in some roles his singing is divine, it does not on the whole equal that of Michelena. His singing was not of the capricious order so common to the time, which disappoints in four roles and in the fifth is so brilliant as temporarily, at least, to redeem the weakness; but ever the same conscientious endeavor characterized his efforts, for which the woman whose roles were so interwoven with his own, was honored. It would be difficult to say in what roles Michelena appeared to best advantage, although the sympathetic qualities of his voice were adapted to intensely emotional or sentimental parts; and with Abbott in Ruy Blas. Trovatore, Lucia, Norma and Anne Boleyn he gave inexpressible delight.

Lizzie Annandale's service was long and faithfully rendered. Her work was as painstaking as if she were to reap the entire reward, and she seldom permitted anything to deter her from an appearance for which she was billed. When suffering from colds which would have been sufficient excuse for remaining at her hotel, she unselfishly thought of the disappointment to Miss Abbott and the public, and did her best.

Miss Annandale joined the company in 1881, and with the exception of one season has since been continuously one of its most popular members. She has usually appeared six, and often seven times each week, and yet at the beginning of the present season her voice seemed as fresh as ever. So implicit was Miss Abbott's trust that her contralto would not fail her, Annandale never during her years of connection with the company had a regular understudy.

It is not usually known that during her years of application abroad, Miss Annandale studied soprano roles, yet no one, or at least few, who ever heard her highest notes, failed to express surprise at their clearness. Her range is simply wonderful, extending two octaves, or from low A to A above the staff, singing either extreme with perfect ease, and pleasing effect. She has at various times assumed soprano roles, and always with

success. Among these is Carmen, for which she was always cast at a performance of that opera by the Abbott company.

When Annandale joined the company she became at once a great favorite with its patrons. Especially was this true of the west, and in Denver, Kansas City, Omaha and St. Louis all the susceptible male hearts were at once set fluttering by the brunette beauty of the new contralto. Flowers and sweetmeats in sufficient quantities to stock a moderate sized conservatory and confectionery stand, were sent to her dressing room and hotel, and reams of paper were freighted with sentimental gush, all addressed to the adorable "Lizzie."

Patrons of the company soon learned to associate Abbott and Annandale professionally. Their Martha and Nancy, Leonora and Azucena, Norma and Adalgisa will be long remembered. No one who ever saw the two in Carnival of Venice, will ever hear even snatches of that charming opera without recalling Annandale's big-flowered dress, poke bonnet and hand satchel, and Abbott's dainty, beribboned frock, white apron, pretty hose and neatly fitting slippers. Her interpretation of her role in the new opera, *Bal Masque*, also won admiration and praise for its vocal excellence and dramatic power. In all their roles where the success of the opera depended as much upon the one as the other, Miss Abbott seemed as heartily pleased with applause, flowers, and press commendations, accorded her associate, as if bestowed upon herself.

Miss Abbott was especially fond of young and beautiful women, and when in the summer of 1888, Helene Bertram was introduced to her, was captivated by her beauty of face and figure, as well as her fine voice. She never wearied of recounting the beauty and grace of the new soprano, and was delighted when strangers noted her striking resemblance to the girl-wife of President Cleveland. She embraced every opportunity to put the young songstress forward, and made a point of calling attention to her conscientious, praiseworthy efforts.

The prima donna's admiration for her understudy was shared by the entire company, and the musical director, Signor Tomasi,

was soon noticed to take more than a passing interest in the addition to the ranks of singers. But a few months passed, ere he announced to Mr. and Mrs. Wetherell that a wedding was to occur in the future.

Unlike most stars, Miss Abbott encouraged marriage between the members of her company, because, said she, "I know what a safe-guard a husband is to a woman in my profession, when that husband is one's constant companion. Where both belong to one company, their tastes, their aims and expectations are one; and they are as a rule more contented. Besides, life is short enough at the best, and I can't feel it is right for men and women to deny themselves a companion just because their life is in one sense a nomadic one. I should prefer, however, that none of my company marry outside the profession, because under such conditions both are discontented and annulment of contract is apt to occur."

Tomasi and his beautiful wife were not only favorites with the company, but made friends wherever they travelled, and would have remained with Miss Abbott until the end, but for the mischief-making propensities and maliciousness of a member of the company, who, though a brilliant singer and performer, caused the management more trouble than all else beside; who took especial delight in the endeavor to estrange the management and Tomasi, and finally the relations between them were severed. Miss Abbott parted with her old orchestral leader and Miss Bertram with unfeigned sorrow, and ever after was solicitous for their welfare, rejoicing when success came to them, and sorrowing deeply in their bereavement and misfortunes. In Miss Abbott's death, Helene Bertram lost one of her warmest friends, one who was as ready to commend her professional work after their separation as before.

William Broderick was another of the "standbys" of the company. Ten years ago his voice was only fairly good, and his acting ranked lower. There was, however, foundation for something better, and each year's advancement gave evidence of the endeavor and application with which he pursued his art.

Had he spent three or four years abroad, then returned to this country as a *Senor* or *Monsieur*, and the rest of his cognomen unpronounceable, opera-goers would have gone wild over his magnificent vocalization.

Broderick is but a young man, yet his ten years of experience, study, and endeavor, entitle him to a place in the front ranks of dramatic vocalists. In the list of excellent bassos, he has many inferiors, some peers, and but few superiors. Among his greatest roles, are the Count in Trovatore, Don Pedro in Rose of Castile, Renato in Masked Ball, The Miser in Chimes of Normandy, the Count in Bohemian Girl, and others. His "Heart Bowed Down," in the opera last mentioned, has never failed to appeal to the hearts of an audience, always winning an *encore*, frequently a second one, and often a call before the curtain.

Walter Allen was for years stage manager and Buffo Basso of the Abbott company, and in his line did excellent work. Faithful to the interests of the management, careful that every detail which would add in the slightest degree to the performance, was supplied, and painstaking in his own work, he became popular with all, and when, soon after Mr. Wetherell's death, he severed his relations with the troupe, his absence was regretted by every member, and by Miss Abbott.

William McCormack, or as Mr. and Mrs. Wetherell called him, "Billy," was their property man for ten years, and the latter grew as fond of him as of a child. Both he and Consadine, her private secretary (to her the latter was always Dan), were ever ready to attend her or to fulfil her slightest wish, whether or not in their regular line of duty, and she frequently spoke of them in the most affectionate terms as "My boys, Billy and Dan. They are part of my daily life, and are so good to me."

Martin Pache, Richard Karl, Miss Emma Broderick, Mrs. Michelena, Miss Grace Vernon, Alice Ellerington and Nellie Franklin, were others of the company, who by the little courtesies of life that outweigh others apparently greater, endeared themselves to their leader.

Of her early repertoire Miss Abbott liked best, Paul and Virginia, Daughter of the Regiment, and Martha. The latter was her favorite, for opening new houses; and at thirteen of the twenty-five opera houses opened by the Abbott company, the star appeared as "Martha;" the great lady masquerading as a peasant girl. To this role her saucy, coquettish ways were especially adapted, and Abbott's "Last Rose of Summer," is of national reputation.

Miss Ellerington says of this opera, "When Miss Abbott felt particularly jolly and wanted a frolic, she liked to sing "Martha" and entered into the fun as heartily as ever did any of her audiences. She liked especially well one little Martha dress of white mulle, the coquettish sunbonnet with its red ribbon bow, and the little red shawl tied as a sash."

Among her treasures Miss Ellerington has a beautiful flounce of delicate lace, the pattern of which Miss Abbott especially admired, and which Miss Ellerington was making for a new Martha dress. Only a few days prior to her last illness Miss Abbott surprised the "lace-maker" industriously plying her needle and affectionately said, "For me, isn't it, dear?" then turned to one of the girls present saying: "Alice is always working, always doing something nice for me."

She was almost child-like in her appreciation of gifts or favors from those who loved her, and prized the simple souvenir of affection more than the richest gift gold could purchase, if she entertained the slightest suspicion it was given for policy's sake or to buy her favor. The little gifts from the "girls and boys" she carefully treasured, and recounted to her friends with delight the deeds and words which betokened their devotion to her. Not because she wished the public to understand that she commanded their esteem or the semblance thereof, but it did her heart good to know that she was beloved.

CHAPTER VII.



HERE are scores of incidents connected with the dead singer's career which are of interest to the reading public, some of which have never seen print, and others have been incorrectly stated. Many of the former relate to her deeds of benevolence which were numerous, indeed almost daily. She was generous-hearted and extremely sensitive to suffering; a ready sympathizer in all phases of sorrow, and her sympathy oftener found expression in deeds than words.

Every city in the United States which has, during her years of financial prosperity, been afflicted by famine, fire, flood or pestilence, has occasion to thank Emma Abbott for generous contributions in their hour of need.

In the dark days of 1878 at Memphis, when through the North came that pitiful appeal from the few who remained on duty, in behalf of their stricken city, the Abbott treasury contained a few thousands rather than millions as at the close of her life. But her heart was stirred at the daily recitals of suffering, and although abroad, absorbed in study when the epidemic began, her check for a thousand dollars was promptly

forwarded to the aid committee. Besides this she sought out the families of the American Colony in Paris, and asked their co-operation and patronage in a benefit concert for the yellow fever sufferers in their native land. All responded nobly; and within a week two thousand dollars more were on the way to relieve the wants of some poor, despairing souls. When the company organized for the season, two benefit performances were given, the proceeds of which went South.

By reason of the awful disaster at Chatsworth, Ill., more than two score children were left destitute and a number of families deprived of their means of support, and hundreds maimed for life. As soon as the singer heard of the accident, she remembered her old home in Peoria, and as many citizens of Peoria were on the ill-fated train, she sent letters of inquiry regarding the unfortunates and how their needs were to be met. As soon as replies were received she forwarded a generous sum to the relief committee, saying, "So far as you can consistently without leaving others to suffer, apply this to the needs of the wounded and bereaved who belong to Peoria."

The Johnstown disaster came soon after the close of a most prosperous season, and to the calls for aid, Abbott was one of the first to respond with a generous sum. In addition to this there were children who were by that dreadful visitation rendered homeless orphans, who owe to her the fact that they are to-day either self-supporting or so situated that they will soon be. A fund was placed in charge of a trusted friend in Pittsburg, which through careful expenditure has afforded home, clothing and schooling, to six children between the ages of seven and twelve, and cared for three others over twelve, who have become stenographers or assistant book-keepers. Thus nine children, who might have gone either to the almshouse or other institution and perhaps finished their career in prison, have been provided with good moral teaching, and started on life's journey self-respecting and self-sustaining. Three only of these young pensioners were ever seen by their benefactress, but it is certain they will not cease to cherish her memory.

When Louisville was visited by the terrible cyclone of '88, Miss Abbott's check for one thousand dollars sent to Henry Watterson of the *Courier Journal*, for the relief fund, was among the first contributions from outside the city. Cincinnati at the time of the floods of '89 received material aid from the same generous source. To the Irish cause, also, Miss Abbott gave at various times several hundred dollars. The charitable institutions of many cities have been tendered benefit performances, which never failed to swell materially the fund in need.

During an engagement of the company in Washington in the winter of '86 a personal friend called on Miss Abbott and mentioned to her the fact that a lady who had, during their childhood in Peoria, been a mutual friend, had died the day before, leaving a family of little children and an invalid husband in reduced circumstances. Miss Abbott was especially desirous of being in good voice that evening, as the President and wife and some of the cabinet and diplomatic corps were to occupy boxes at the performance. It was storming, half rain, half sleet; but said she, "Poor Dora; I must go with you to see her family and look on her own sweet face again." They took a cab, and in a few moments entered the humble home where a neighbor and the help (one young girl) were alone with the little ones and their dead mother. The singer burst into tears as she bent over the form of her old friend, and looked upon the motherless children, the youngest of which was a daughter, three months old. Even its tiny nature seemed to respond to the warmth and affection of the stranger, and its great blue eyes and rosebud mouth were kissed by her again and again. The father entered a few moments later, and was introduced by her companion to "Mrs. Wetherell, an old friend of Dora's," and seemed grateful for the sympathy and attention bestowed upon his bereaved little ones. The singer bade the lonely family adieu, promising to attend the funeral on the following morning, and to see them again before she left the city.

The Mikado was on the bills for the evening performance, and the theater was packed to the doors with the wealth and



Abbott as Violetta.

beauty of the capital city. "Yum Yum" giggled and smiled, and kissed her hand to the graceful girl-wife of President Cleveland, and being absorbed in her role, forgot for the moment the lonely household in an humbler quarter of the city. But when the interpolation of the lullaby song from Erminie, "Dear mother! In dreams I see her," the tears would flow and the heart swelled with affection as she sang to the imaginary baby in her arms,

"Bye, bye, drowsiness o'ertaking,
Pretty little eyelids sleep;
Bye, bye, watching till thou'rt waking,
Darling, be thy slumber deep."

A pin drop would have disturbed the silence that reigned throughout the house as the last notes of the chorus died away. All were astonished that the rollicking, giggling "little maid from school" could so soon lose herself in an entirely opposite role, and many were the comments during the succeeding wait upon the "feeling and realism" of which the singer was capable. A gentleman present remarked, "I always knew little Abbott could sing, but I thought only Clara Morris could shed tears at will on the stage."

At the hour for the funeral a magnificent carriage stopped at the gate of the bereaved home, and there alighted the resident lady friend, Miss Abbott and a gentleman member of her company. After prayer and reading of the usual service, the officiating clergyman announced a hymn, but as no arrangements had been made there were no singers to respond. At a signal from Miss Abbott her companion stepped to her side and they sang the duet,

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee."

Among the little group of neighbors who had assembled to show their sympathy, there was not a dry eye; and the stricken husband sobbed aloud. Then came a word of consolation from the officiating clergyman, and again the clear soprano sang, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." * * * All was over, and

when the little band returned to the house, the husband and father took Miss Abbott's hand and said: "I want to thank you for your singing. I was on the verge of despair. I know I must soon follow Dora, and I had almost lost faith in God. But since you sang that beautiful hymn 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' I feel that I can trust all with Him." Then followed a few moments' conversation as to his plans for the children and their future care, and when this was concluded she took the baby girl from her cradle, and said: "How I wish I could adopt her as my own, but my profession will not permit. If, however, you will allow this, her mother's friend and mine, to take her as her own, she will be to her a mother, and I will place to her credit a sum sufficient for her maintenance and education until she is able to care for herself. I will also give her my name, *Emma Abbott.*" Then for the first time did the father learn that his newly found friend was the famous singer and wife of a millionaire. He died the following spring after placing his eldest children in the Ohio Soldiers' Orphans Home, and leaving little Emma Abbott in Washington with her adopted mother, who will in years to come teach her to revere at once the memory of her mother, and the generous-hearted woman whose bestowal has given her food and clothing and will make her self-sustaining.

During a Montgomery, Alabama, engagement, the singer was out with her maid for a morning stroll, enjoying the balmy southern air, and the almost tropical brilliancy of foliage and flowers. Her walk being longer than usual extended to a part of the city inhabited by numerous colored families. At one of the houses she noticed the usual signs of a funeral, and after inquiring of the bystanders something regarding the household, her curiosity regarding their funeral ceremonies, and a desire to hear them sing, led her to enter. The only white person in the company, she was the object of much attention, and her appearance betokened her as "one of the quality." A chair was given her, and other possible courtesies extended before the sermon began, from which she learned that the deceased was an old

woman who had been many years a slave; and who ranked high in the esteem of her neighbors and associates because of her Christian virtues. At the conclusion of the remarks a brother in the room began, "Swing low, sweet Chariot" and in the singing of the second line, every one present joined. In relating the incident Miss Abbott said, "Oh! that music! I never heard such soulful singing before, and I never expect to again until I pass through the pearly gates. Talk about the negro having no soul! Do I believe God would put such melody into the voice of creatures who have no souls? No! I only hope that such music may attend my body on its last earthly journey." The aged husband was left alone, and his heart seemed broken as he stood looking for the last time upon the face of her who had cheered him for half a century, through the trials of slavery, and had shared with him the blessed privileges of freedom.

When the engagement of the company in that southern city was over, few, if any of its members knew that their leader's share of the week's profits was left behind, to provide the lonely old colored man with necessary comforts during his few remaining days.

A touching little incident in Abbott's early life is related by Major Elward of Peoria, who was one of the friends of her childhood. She retained her regard for him to the end, and improved every opportunity to show her gratitude for the encouragement extended by him in those days of darkness which preceded her dawn.

She had been travelling through Iowa with a concert company, but owing to the fact that she received no pay, she cancelled her engagements with them, and determined to sing her way home without writing for assistance. She had reached Clifton, Iowa, a little village, the population of which consisted mostly of railroad men.

A hall had been spoken for and handbills circulated, announcing that Emma Abbott would sing in the evening. Major Elward was in the village on business, and as he passed a bulletin board, noticed thereon the announcement of the appearance of

his young friend. Having nothing on hand for the evening he decided to invite two acquaintances, and with them attend the concert.

Early in the afternoon snow began to fall, and before dark a blizzard, such as only Dakota and Iowa have ever experienced, was raging. Early in the evening Major Elward and his associates started for the concert hall, and on arriving purchased tickets at the door, but found no one inside. Hearing voices at the extreme end of the room behind the curtain, he walked forward, and was astonished to hear the well-known voice of his little friend pleading with some one, and saying, "Please don't take my guitar from me, I love it so; I can't part with it; I will pay you just as soon as I earn the money, or I will send home and get it; you shall have your pay, but please, sir, don't take my guitar." The other voice was hard and unrelenting, and insisted on immediate payment for the rent of the hall or the release of the guitar. Major Elward could endure no more, so he drew back the curtain exclaiming; "No sir; you'll not touch that guitar. If the weather were favorable the hall would have been filled, and you would have received your ten dollars, which, by the way is a most extravagant charge; but the child is not to blame for the blizzard. I have paid three dollars for tickets. That will cover your expense, and pay for your trouble, but you will get no more." Then turned to the girl who had greeted him with "Oh, Elward! you have come just in time;" saying "Come, Emma, we'll go now."

Arriving at the hotel he ordered a nice lunch for her, and while she partook of that, related the event just described to a company of railroad men who were gathered in the hotel office. Among these was a Scotchman, who inquired of Elward if his protégé could sing "Within a Mile of Edinboro' Town." Her lunch finished, the Major arranged for a little entertainment in the hotel sitting room, the program beginning with the Scotchman's favorite song. The hearts of the listeners were touched, and the voluntary offering to the little lady who had entertained them so charmingly, was not a small one.



" 'Tis the Last Rose of Summer."

This was one of a series of incidents in the early life of the singer which established her faith in God, and led her so often to say to friends who were under a cloud: "You must do as I do; trust Him where you cannot see the way, assured that He will lead you into light."

Another little incident which shows how lasting was her gratitude is as follows. In 1880 the Abbott Opera Company was for a fortnight in financial straits, and while in Peoria the treasury, after paying the week's salaries and setting aside the hotel bills, was without a dollar. The receipts of the week would, of course, be good, but there was the transportation of the company to Chicago to be deducted. An advertising bill of $23.00 payable to Col. Dowdall, editor of the Peoria National Democrat, was due, and Mr. Wetherell asked a short extension, which was courteously granted. A month later the bill was paid, but Miss Abbott did not then consider the obligation discharged. Each year thereafter during the company's engagement in the city, she tendered to Col. Dowdall and family the use of a box, and often sent a carriage to take them to and from the theater.

CHAPTER VIII.



URING her last engagement in San Francisco, America's ideal Martha sang the "Last Rose of Summer" under such conditions as it was never sung before. Not as Martha, the lady masquerading as the servant girl, not as Abbott, the prima donna, but as a warm hearted, sympathetic woman endeavoring to cast a ray of light into the "Valley of the shadow" which a brother was about to enter.

A gentleman from Detroit, Mr. Phillip J. Boost, was lying hopelessly ill at the residence of his brother on twenty-second street. He had been for years a regular patron of Abbott engagements in Detroit, and never missed hearing the company's rendering of Martha. Abbott's rendering of "The Last Rose of Summer," was his ideal music. When first attacked by pulmonary trouble, he started for the Pacific coast, hoping through the mildness of climate to gain; but Providence otherwise directed and he had given up all hope of recovery.

When the engagement at the Baldwin began he seemed interested, and watched eagerly for the morning papers and their dramatic criticisms. With the reading of the reviews of the performances came the longing to hear once more his ideal

song, and he implored his physician and friends to take him to the *matinee* performance of Martha. Of course this was impossible, as he was too weak to walk to and from a carriage; but the dying man, usually submissive, refused to be satisfied. "If I could hear Abbott sing that one song, I would be satisfied," he said to Mrs. M. A. Hotaling, a friend who sat near him, and who frequently dropped in to cheer his lonely hours.

Mrs. Hotaling boarded at the Baldwin hotel where Miss Abbott made her home when in the city, and she took pains to relate to the prima donna her invalid friend's admiration. Miss Abbott said: "I want you to take me to your young friend at once; if my singing will afford him one moment's pleasure or forgetfulness of pain, I shall feel that my afternoon is spent in doing my heavenly Father's will." On account of a heavy rain it was suggested that they wait, but she said, "No, to-morrow may be too late."

The introduction was a great surprise, and in his feeble state something of a shock to the young man, and several moments passed before he could speak to voice his gratitude for the call and its purpose, and the singer then refused to permit him to do so. Tenderly laying her finger on his lips, she said, "Save your strength, my dear, and use it in voicing your wishes to your friends and making your peace for the life to come."

The others in the room withdrew, and the interview between the invalid just finishing a short life and the singer who to all appearance had years to enjoy, lasted nearly an hour. Only God knows how much of hope for the future and the peace that cometh of perfect trust in Him that noble woman imparted to the invalid's weary soul. Then the family were summoned to listen to the song.

There was no stage, no costuming, no properties save a blush rose she had selected from a floral tribute of the preceding night. The invalid lay on his pillow like one entranced, almost breathless, his eyes fixed, his ear strained lest he lose a note of the charming melody. Abbott probably never put more pathos and feeling into the words,

"No flower of her kindred, no rosebud is nigh
To reflect back her blushes, or give sigh for sigh."

and as she sang the beautiful petals fell silently to the floor, one by one. The last stanza was repeated softly, and when it was concluded, the invalid lay asleep; a smile of perfect peacefulness lighting his pale, worn face. As she took her departure the visitor turned and looked a moment at the sleeping invalid, and said softly to an attendant, "Tell him when he awakens I say that smile is to me worth more than all the applause of last night." * * Two weeks later both singer and listener had passed over the river, and entered into Peace. Not the peace of the Pantheist, but that which comes after a life of unselfishness, a life squared by the Golden Rule of Love.

Similar in some of its features was the incident of Miss Abbott's singing in a New York city charity hospital. The idea suggested itself to her mind, and she wrote a note to the physician in charge as follows: "I have been thinking that perhaps your sick ones might enjoy an afternoon of song, and if you think the results would be favorable I will come on Monday for an hour or two and sing a few simple, cheerful songs in each ward." It is unnecessary to say that the generous offer was accepted; and those in charge afterward asserted that no announcement was ever received by the inmates with such gratification and enthusiastic anticipation. The singer in recalling her visit said, "I was not received with cheers or shouts; but brightened eyes, flushed cheeks, and happy smiles bespoke the delight of the poor sick creatures."

She went from ward to ward, leaving at each bed a simple flower, speaking here and there words of encouragement, and singing songs of hope and cheer, pausing anon to take a wan, white hand in hers, and soothe with her gentle touch an aching brow.

As she reached the wards where the consumptive patients were, she noticed on a cot a young girl of about eighteen years, beside whom sat a nurse intently watching the patient lest she pass away unheeded. At a little distance from her lay a frail

woman of middle age, and by her bed the visitor paused, laid a delicate tea rose on the sick woman's pillow and said, "I have come to-day to sing to you, if you wish." "Oh, yes; so much!" replied the patient; "I haven't heard a song for ever and ever so long."

Softly rose the sweet voice,

"There's a land that is fairer than day;
And by faith we may see it afar."

When she reached the chorus,

"In the sweet Bye and Bye,
We shall meet on that beautiful shore,"

the young girl on the farther cot opened her eyes and turned them from one object to another until they rested on the singer. Simultaneously with her own, the pale, thin lips formed the words, "Bye and Bye," and prostrated by the effort, sank back into apparent sleep.

Again the visitor sang,

"Do Thou, Lord, midst pleasure or woe
For heaven our spirits prepare;
Then shortly we also shall know
And feel what it is to be there."

As she sang the refrain,

"To be there, to be there;
Oh, what must it be to be there!"

the lips of the dying girl moved, and the words, "*I'm almost there;*" were spoken with her last breath.

Miss Abbott left the room and the building without a word, simply nodding an adieu, as she passed out of the door. The following morning an elaborate pillow of white japonicas with the words "Bye and Bye" in heliotrope, contrasted strangely with the plain stained casket which was borne from the building, but the face beneath bore a smile which betokened the joy that possessed the soul as borne on the wings of song it entered "The land that is fairer than day."

While taking a walk one morning in Denver, Miss Abbott's attention was attracted toward a trio of little people playing on

the sidewalk, and it occurred to her that they were thinly clad for the season. To one of the number, a little girl about six years of age she said; "If I give you some money will you go at once and buy a pair of shoes and put them on your feet?" The child hesitated a minute, then answered, "I'd rather buy a basket of grapes for mamma and Mabel 'cause they is, both sick, and my feet is warm enough, indeed they is, ma'am." It is almost unnecessary to say that the little lady's story was investigated, and that not only "Mamma and Mabel" received an abundant supply of the choicest fruit, and other dainties, but little Trixie wore shoes the rest of the winter. Two years later a letter reached Miss Abbott through the *New York Mirror* letter box, which ran as follows: "My dear Friend, I will begin by telling you that I am Mabel Blaine, sister of 'little Trixie' to whom you gave the money to buy shoes in Denver. Our mamma died soon after you went away, but the kind gentleman you sent to see us, did everything he could do for us all. I am working in a nice family as nurse girl and go to school part of the year. The gentleman, Mr. Tabor, gave Trixie and me ten dollars apiece last Saturday to buy us some warm cloaks for winter, and when we thanked him he said: 'It came from Miss Emma Abbott, the opera singer.' The lady I live with told me if I write a letter thanking you for your good heart you will get it. She will send it to a paper, and you will hear about it. I am glad to have a chance to tell you how much we thank you."

This letter did Miss Abbott much good, and as she showed it to the author the tears rolled down her cheeks as she remarked "That is real gratitude."

To the infliction of the death penalty for any crime whatever she was strongly opposed, and she has argued the question with many distinguished jurists both of America and Europe. Her plea was this "To man his brother man can give the right to enjoy all the privileges of life, and can also deter him from the same. The law therefore has a right to deprive a man of his liberty as a penalty for the commission of crime, because,

in the event that the convicted man is later found innocent of the aforesaid crime, that liberty can be restored to him. God only, however, can give life, and only God should take it. Capital punishment is a stain on the name of every state or government which practices it."

When a few years since, in New York city, Jennie Smith and her lover were condemned to die, and one of the daily papers said that if a thousand dollars were to be had the prisoners could secure a new trial, Miss Abbott called a cab and going into Wall street among the bankers, brokers, etc., with a subscription paper headed by herself and husband, she secured in one hour more than the thousand dollars needed. The prisoners were given a new trial, and both were acquitted.

Abbott's courage, or what is usually termed nerve, was phenomenal. At a one night stand in the south the stage settings caught fire, and the members of the company made a stampede. Miss Abbott caught the curtain and rugs and with them extinguished the flames.

The saving of the little daughter of a prominent physician of Dallas, Texas, has been told a score of times in print, but it being one of the most thrilling of all her experiences it is worthy of repetition here. The company were giving performances in a southern city where it is seldom cold enough to furnish skating for lovers of that amusement. The winter of '84 and '85 however had been one of unusual severity throughout the south and in several cities skating rinks did, for a few weeks, a thriving business.

One afternoon in the city before mentioned, the company were on the ice, led in grace and swiftness by their beloved star. All at once Miss Abbott was seen to strike out alone, and all as was their custom refrained from intruding their presence when she seemed to desire solitude. After speeding for several rods like the wind, she was seen to stoop and draw from beneath the ice the form of a child. Some of the members of the company started to aid her, but raising her hand she beckoned them to go back; shouting at the top of her

voice, "Don't come, the ice will not bear you." Cautiously she crept on hands and knees, pushing before her the drenched form she had rescued. All watched her with breathless anxiety as the ice swayed and cracked beneath her weight. Finally when beyond danger she rose to her feet, and taking the little one in her arms carried her to the anxious crowd of spectators. The danger passed and the child in the arms of her friends, she gave herself into the hands of an attendant, drenched and chilled to the bone, and almost overcome with fright and anxiety, supplemented by joy that she had been able to rescue one from a watery grave.

The little one was with friends, a spectator of the afternoon's sport, and how she came to wander away on the ice unobserved, no one seemed to understand. Miss Abbott had chanced to glance in that direction just in time to see the child disappear, and having been warned that the ice in that quarter was unsafe, refrained from giving an alarm lest others follow her and her purpose to rescue the child be thwarted. Others might have sent another, and, if wealthy, have offered a munificent reward, but Emma Abbott, true to her unselfish nature, forgot that she was placing her own life in jeopardy; forgot that a chill such as she must undergo might cost her that magnificent voice; forgot all, save that the life of a little child was in danger, and that unless she went to the rescue, a home would be forever darkened.

At Chatanooga a few nights later, the heroine of the incident was presented by admirers with a solid silver yacht in token of appreciation of her bravery.

At Long Branch soon after the organization of her company, Abbott saved the life of a Miss Annie Colgrove of Indianapolis who, with a company of friends, were bathing while the tide was receding. None of the party were expert swimmers, and when the young lady was carried off her feet by an outgoing wave, all seemed to lose presence of mind. Miss Abbott, who was just about to return to the bathing house, saw the danger which threatened the girl, plunged into the water and with a

few skillful strokes reached her side, and turning, fought a fierce battle with the waves and her unconscious burden, ere she relinquished the latter to her friends on shore.

Next morning Miss Colgrove, accompanied by her father, called on Miss Abbott to emphasize the thanks of the previous evening and there was formed a friendship which was broken only by the death of Miss Colgrove in 1887 at Honolulu. Mr. Colgrove numbers among his treasures a letter of condolence from Emma Abbott Wetherell, and wears on his watch chain a Maltese cross of gold with the words "In Memoriam," on one side, and on the reverse, her favorite signature, a musical staff with the letters "E. A." in whole notes. Among those who regret the early death of the songstress there is no more sincere mourner than the father of one whom she imperilled her own life to save.

CHAPTER IX.



LTHOUGH not aggressive in disposition, Abbott would not allow either her profession nor any member thereof, to be assailed in her presence without assuming their defense. Were the shortcomings of individuals recalled she was sure to find counter traits of character and the profession she always defended with her might.

On one occasion while returning from Europe, she was sitting on deck occupied with a book. Her husband sat near reading a newspaper; and neither noticed a group of fellow-passengers consisting of two elderly ladies, three gentlemen and a young lady, the daughter of one of the elderly couples, all of whom were settled for a friendly gossip. It appeared that the young lady's parents, the mother especially, were so radical in their religious belief as to be intolerant of every one who differed with them in opinion. One of the gentlemen was a liberal minister whose acquaintance they had formed during the voyage, through some slight favor rendered, and they were ignorant of his creed.

Their conversation ran from one thing to another, until the divine chanced to mention his parish, when to the surprised

inquiry from the lady as to what denomination he belonged, he replied: "I am pastor of —— Universalist church, Chicago." She looked aghast, and after giving the liberals a scoring, said her principal criticism of them was their defense of the stage. The minister courteously defended his creed, and mentioned the names of several of the dramatic and operatic profession whose purity of character is unquestioned.

His opponent made war upon the profession generally, asserting that as a unit they lightly regarded the marriage vow; said she would as soon her daughter would become a member of the *demi monde* at once as to go by the "stage route," and finally challenged the minister to mention a woman of the profession who was living with a man she had married five years before; saying, "I don't believe there is one."

This was more than the singer-wife could endure, and jumping to her feet she remarked, "Then behold me; I have been on the stage more than eleven years, and half that time have lived with the gentleman at my side; not half so good a wife as he deserves, but at least rewarding his love with a devotion and fidelity no one living dare question."

The clergyman, who, although a personal friend, had not recognized her or her husband, or even known they were fellow passengers, took her hand, gladly witnessing her testimony and commending her defense of her profession. During the remainder of the journey Mr. and Mrs. Wetherell were watched by the radicals as a pair of curiosities or freaks.

Similar to this was the prima donna's experience at Nashville, Tenn., which has since her death been told in every way but the true one; and said to have occurred in every city south of Mason and Dixon's line except Nashville. The week had not been a heavy one with the company, still it was not an engagement of which to complain, and it was a curious fact that on the heaviest nights the audience was well sprinkled with members of the —— Presbyterian parish; and even some of the church members themselves were there.

Their pastor having heard of their frivolity, had prepared a

sermon for the following Sabbath on sinful amusements, and bore down with especial emphasis upon the stage and the opera in particular. Asserting that a number of his congregation had attended the performances of the week, he denounced them as in league with hell and abetting Satan.

Then he dwelt at length upon the evils of stage life, its tendency to intemperance, lack of respect for the marriage vow, etc., reviewed the private lives of McCullough, Bernhardt and others, with the facts of which the public has often been regaled, and in sweeping terms denounced all as one; the male members intemperate, dishonorable, the females impure, unwomanly.

In the audience was a stranger, who, attired with exceeding modesty, had unassumingly dropped in almost unobserved at the beginning of the service, and been ushered to a seat without revealing her identity. Had the sermon been gospel, she would have departed as she entered, unknown and unheard; but her wrath was aroused, and some one was sure to hear from her. When the minister ceased speaking and asked God's blessing on "the truths (?) just spoken," etc., he took his hymn-book and made ready to announce the closing hymn, when, to his astonishment, a lady near the center aisle arose and said "I cannot refrain from expressing my indignation that a minister ordained to preach Christ should so far forget his mission, and so far depart from truth as to make the assertions to which I have listened, regarding the profession of which I am, I trust, an honored member. There are among us men and woman who have sinned, as there are men in every calling of life who have disgraced their profession.

"I have known men who had taken upon themselves the vows of the clergy, and been ordained to that holy calling, who have fallen as low as man can fall, and I have known, I know to-day, men and women in my own profession against whom no breath of suspicion or slander has been cast. There are Jenny Lind, Christine Nihlsson, Clara Louise Kellogg, Miss Cary, Pauline l'Allemana, Charlotte Cushman, Parepa Rosa, Mary Anderson,



Abbott as Marguerite in Faust.

Madame Rhea, Mrs. W. J. Florence, Georgie Drew, and Emma Abbott, if you will. Find a stain on the character of one of these, or of scores of others I might name, before you denounce a profession which can be followed with hearts as pure, and lives irreproachable as may your own."

So completely was the audience in sympathy with the impromptu speaker that they applauded heartily.

During the reading of the hymn entitled "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" a gentleman from the remote side of the room handed Miss Abbott a hymn-book, and she entered on the familiar tune "Coronation," to find at the end of the second line she was singing a solo with organ accompaniment. She sang to the close when another burst of applause preceded the benediction. After service many members of the congregation met the lady at the door and extended to her assurance of their commendation and high esteem.

On reaching her room at the hotel, she burst into a hearty fit of laughter, which to her husband seemed a strange frame of mind in which to return from church, and he inquired the cause. "Well, 'Gene," was the reply, "I didn't carry on the entire service, but I did very nearly; I prayed, preached, and sang." "I can account for the singing and praying" said he, "but not the preaching." "I preached a sermon, and a good one, too, after the minister had concluded a long one. He didn't get a hand, while the entire house applauded me, and wanted an encore, but I wouldn't have it that way;" and she proceeded to relate the incidents of the morning, concluding with, "What do you think of that?" "I think," replied Mr. Wetherell, "that Othello's occupation's gone, and that you have no further need of my services, at least in the line of advertising."

On a journey across the continent, a minister who was traveling in the same car, evidently thought it an opportunity to do a little missionary work and took occasion to introduce himself to Miss Abbott and remonstrate with her on the evils of the life she led. She listened with due courtesy until he paused, then replied: "I know I am far from perfect, and my life is not

without its faults; but for my profession I have no apologies to offer. You are supposed to teach morality and right-doing from the pulpit, and I hold that there are lessons given from the stage daily which may go as far toward elevating the world's morals as does your preaching. If you condemn all actors for the misdeeds of one, and allow me the same privilege regarding your own profession I must conclude they are a rascally lot, because the meanest man I ever knew was a dishonest, hypocritical preacher. But, sir, I am not so ungenerous. I reverence your calling, while I regret your individual narrowness."

That night a collision occurred which might have proven exceedingly disastrous, but was averted as by a miracle. The minister was the worst scared passenger of the lot, and in speaking of the matter the following morning, remarked, "We were certainly saved by chance last night." "No, not by chance," answered Miss Abbott, "our heavenly Father has work for us yet to do; you in the pulpit, I on the stage." The reverend gentleman made no reply, but his countenance indicated his surprise that one would dare associate his name with that of a member of the operatic profession, and he evidently considered her view of the matter a sacreligious one.

Her generosity towards members of her company was almost, if not quite, unparalled in the history of the profession. If a member of her company were ill, she gave all possible time for recovery, before arranging for a permanent successor; in the interval sending fruit, flowers, and such luxuries as are always grateful to the sick. Many bills for medical attendance for the members of her company were also settled by her. Miss Krause, one of the oldest members of the chorus, has for two years been quite ill, and it was at times feared she might be compelled to resign. Early in the beginning of the last season she was taken down, and at Milwaukee found herself too weak to accompany the rest to St. Paul. Daily the leader inquired after her, and when it was feared she would be unable to join them said, "Wire her to come on where we can see that she has good care. I dislike to leave her there alone." At Christmas

all were liberally remembered, and one of the sweetest memories the company retains is of their Christmas supper and tree at Los Angeles, California, just one week before Miss Abbott's last appearance on the stage.

The mention of Miss Abbott's liberality toward the members of her company recalls the subject of the unfavorable comments upon the will recently admitted to Probate, and although mention of that paper would logically occur later in the work, this seems a fitting place to call attention to a few facts in the case.

Perhaps no will ever made by an American has been so much discussed, and by some persons so severely criticised as has this. Those who condemn its terms are, however, few, and by the greater number of persons the evident intent of the maker is regarded as highly wise and benevolent. To her friends the fact is apparent that the aforesaid will was not made in the expectation that death would occur ere she was permitted to make a succeeding one, or add to this such codicils as she might see fit. She was about to go abroad and feeling that accident might occur to her, having in mind certain persons and charities she wished remembered, named such to her business agents who drew up a paper embodying those suggestions, and she signed it. That she hoped, and confidently expected, to live many years is known by her friends, and had even two years more been granted her, she would have remembered some of those who were omitted in the will, either by legacy or personal bestowal. Among these are Rosa, her faithful attendant, and W. H. McCormack, her property man and a devoted employee.

In some instances the press has been especially cruel in its criticisms, because she did not remember the members of her company, manager, principals and chorus. Had she been aware before she was too ill to think or talk, that the end was so near, the chorus would probably have been provided for, at least those who had served her for any length of time. But there was no time for such business after she was stricken, for with her the beginning was the end. As for Manager Pratt,

and the principals of the company, all had received large salaries, and if they are not beyond the need of legacies, it is because they are, or have been, improvident. Besides, Manager Pratt had, at the close of the preceding season, given Miss Abbott notice that at the close of the season of '90 and '91 he would retire from the management, and she had already entered into negotiations with his successor. To give to the rich was not her custom, and by the terms of her will she did not in a single instance make a bestowal which places the recipient beyond the need of careful investment and economy; and on the other hand, if her wishes are fulfilled, hundreds will be rendered comfortable.

CHAPTER X.



N the season of '87 "Ruy Blas" was added to the company's repertoire, and up to that time its members had given no grander performance. The costumes were exceedingly fine, Miss Abbott having spent weeks of research in the determination that every detail of the presentation should be historically correct.

Three of the most elegant costumes Worth ever made were ordered, and were marvels of beauty.

The first was of white silk, embroidered in a mass of blossoming vines in Nature's colors. In and out among the foliage flitted humming birds, so true in form, color and apparent motion, that one could fancy he heard the buzzing of their wings. The immense train seemed to add to the stature of the wearer, and gave her a truly royal appearance. This costume was valued at many hundreds of dollars, and is one of the most charming of the Abbott collection. Another Ruy Blas dress was of amber and ruby velvet, with an immense mantle of the latter deeply bordered with ermine. A crown of precious stones (a *fac simile* of the crown of Spain), and two elegant fans were accessories of these costumes. The last act dress

was of black velvet and satin brocade, the design a laurel leaf, and woven especially for the Abbott wardrobe. With this dress the mimic queen wore her entire collection of gems arranged in a Maltese cross, which extended diagonally across the front of the bodice, and when thus attired was thought by many of her admirers to make her most elegant appearance.

During the summer of 1888 Miss Abbott worked very hard, looking over in Paris, London and Florence, old newspaper and magazine files, and searching in all probable places for descriptions, criticisms, etc., of Norma, as presented in the past, studying the details of costumes, properties, etc., and bestowing much time under Madame LaGrange to the vocalization. Besides Norma she studied one or two other operas, with a view to their production during the season.

Returning late in August the annual "call" was issued for the second week in September, and rehearsals for Norma began. Two weeks later the regular season opened in Detroit, and enjoyed four of the most prosperous months of its existence. They sang in Chicago, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, St. Paul and Omaha, thence with a few stops to the Pacific coast. At every point they were greeted by crowded houses, and in San Francisco during a month's engagement at the Baldwin Theater there was no lessening of the patronage or diminution of enthusiasm.

Up to this time Mr. Wetherell had been with the company, but on the return trip left the management with his partner, Mr. Pratt, and hastened over the mountains to arrange some business at points where he and his wife held valuable real estate, promising to meet her *en route.* The days of separation had almost expired, and the devoted wife was hastening as fast as steam and time could carry her, toward the meeting place. That very morning she remarked with childish enthusiasm, "Just a few hours more, Dan, and we'll meet our husband." Mr. Consadine assented, and tried to enter into her mood, but his heart was troubled. He had received a telegram from Mr. Wetherell mentioning his indisposition, and this he withheld

from the wife, knowing her nervous, apprehensive temperament. That morning he should have received another message, notifying him of time and place he would meet the company. It did not arrive, and negligence in such matters was unknown to Mr. Wetherell. At every station he inquired, but was met with the same reply, "Nothing here."

On January 5th, 1889, as the train pulled into Garden City, Kansas, a messenger boarded the sleeper, saying, "Where is Miss Abbott? Emma Abbott? I have a message for her." He was told by Mr. Consadine that the lady occupied the drawing-room, and that the message if given him (Consadine) would be delivered to her. The messenger hesitated, saying he was told to deliver it in person, but finally yielded and gave it to the secretary, who going to Miss Abbott's door, knocked, and as was his custom, handed in the message. For a moment all within was still; then the door opened and Miss Abbott, pale as if death had chilled her vitals, changed as if a whole decade had passed over her in those ten minutes, with eyes glaring like those of a maniac, appeared. "Who has dared to bring such tidings to me? Who has dared to do this dreadful deed? I say, who dares to bring me such news?" gasped she, looking from one to another, and pointing to the fatal yellow paper.

One read it, then another, then bowed their heads in reverence for her great sorrow. She returned to the drawing room and said, "Leave me alone; I wish to be alone." For a few moments, which to those outside seemed an eternity, all was silent as the grave, and many hearts were apprehensive lest the shock, so terrible in its import, so sudden, might unbalance the mind of the woman thus bereaved. After a time she was heard sobbing and praying, and they knew she was saved. Then she joined the members of the company and said, "I want to think of him as living; I cannot think him dead;" and she related incident after incident, and pleasing reminiscences of their acquaintance, courtship and married life. But when for a moment conversation faltered, and the realization that she was a widow, that her husband was gone forever, came to her

soul, her grief was pitiful. The scene where she entered the presence of her loved dead was pathetic too; but that hour was sacred to herself and her God; and over it the veil of hallowed silence should fall.

Mr. Wetherell was buried at Gloucester, Mass., his early home, and at present the home of his family. Of this interment Miss Abbott afterward said, "I don't know why I buried my husband there, because it was no longer his home, and was not for years before I knew him. New York City was his home and mine; and had he ever expressed a wish regarding his burial, I am certain it would have been that he might rest in beautiful Greenwood. He admired it so much and has said to me, 'Emma, this is the loveliest spot on earth.' Once when I was advocating cremation, and speaking of the horror of being laid away in the cold, damp earth, he remarked, 'It wouldn't be so terrible to be buried in Greenwood; that is a perfect Paradise.'"

After arrangements for Mr. Wetherell's funeral, Mr. C. H. Pratt, associate manager, called the company together, and laid before them Miss Abbott's proposition to give them a two weeks' rest on half salary, at the end of which time she would decide whether or not she would resume her work. It is needless to say that every member of the company gladly acceded to the proposition, and Messrs. Pratt, Consadine, and several of the principals accompanied the widow on her sad journey.

The testimonials of sympathy received by Miss Abbott during that journey gave her much pleasure, indicating as they did a degree of popularity and esteem of which she did not dream. Scores of telegrams sent while she was *en route* were followed by letters of condolence when she returned West, all expressing love and esteem; and heartfelt sympathy in her great affliction.

As soon as the sad rites were over, and the wife had bidden a temporary adieu to Gloucester, the memory of the loneliness of the place seemed to depress her; and the determination was at once formed to remove her husband's remains to Greenwood, and erect there the finest monument of the time. Remembering



Abbott as Queen of Spain, Act I., Ruy Blas.

that this was the only remaining service she could render to the loved one, she derived comfort from consulting with others (her friends and his) regarding plans, designs and materials for a grand mausoleum.

The law of Massachusetts gives a mother the right to refuse to allow even the wife to disinter and remove the body of her husband when once buried. And yet Miss Abbott little dreamed that she who loved her husband so devotedly; who had lavished upon him the best years of her life, and who now that he was gone, would have spent half her fortune to perpetuate his memory, would meet with a refusal on the part of his mother to allow her to carry out her plans.

The mother's home is, and has been for years, at Gloucester. There she had reared her family, and there her husband and other near relatives are buried. There the remains of her son were laid, and to her it seemed like sacrilege to disturb them. The cemetery is, to lovers of the sea, a charming one, and the mother doubtless derives much comfort from the privilege of visiting the grave of her son, a privilege she felt would perhaps never be hers, were he interred in an adjoining state. She reasoned, of course, from a loving mother's standpoint, while Miss Abbott could see only through the tears of a faithful devoted wife, desirous of doing her husband all possible honor, and giving to the public, to which both had ever felt extremely grateful for the patronage which brought them wealth and fame, the privilege of visiting his last resting place. Besides she felt that Greenwood were a more appropriate place for the monument she intended to erect to his memory.

In the excitement attendant upon the refusal of her request, Miss Abbott at first said, "I will abandon my plans for a monument. I do not wish to call the attention of a single soul to the fact that my husband lies in that lonely spot where only the angry roar of the waves, and the wail of the seagull are heard. If his body must remain here, the monument which tells of his virtues and perpetuates his memory may be erected in beautiful Greenwood, where it will be seen by the public that we both

loved, the public to whose encouragement and patronage we owe all that we have and are. I know that would be his wish."

But when the burst of passionate grief had subsided, the generous nature, for which hundreds to-day hold her in loving remembrance, became dominant, and the orders for a monument of great cost and exceeding beauty were placed. Not only so, but in her will Miss Abbott remembered her husband's mother as generously as if her request had been granted.

The press of some sections of the country has said some extremely bitter things concerning the decision which caused Miss Abbott such intense grief, but those who are tempted to judge hastily should remember, that for centuries, mothers and wives have contended for the place of honor in men's hearts, and the question of which has the better right, will never be settled.

The thought of returning to the stage and travelling eight months of the year without her husband, to whom she had appealed for decisions even in the commonest affairs of life, seemed too sad to be entertained. If free from the demands of her profession, she might travel, and amid changing scenes, and new friends, find temporary forgetfulness of her terrible loss.

With most mortals the first thought is of self, and one's own happiness, but Emma Abbott remembered her company. She remembered that the season was only well under way, that the holidays were just over, and few of the members had yet saved anything to tide them over the summer vacation, and said, "I must for their sakes return to my work." Each member was notified of her decision, and in Memphis, just two weeks from the time that sad telegram disbanded them, they again greeted their loved leader, and opened in Ruy Blas.

Then unfeeling reporters and would-be-smart paragraphers, began a series of attacks upon the woman who could (as they put it) so soon forget her sorrow, and take up a profession that required, in many of its roles, the semblance of gayety. These thrusts almost prostrated her; and to Mrs. S. C. Hazlett, of Cincinnati, a journalist of that city who warmly defended her action, and commended its unselfishness, she said, "How

could I have done otherwise? My company are perfectly devoted to me. They are my family, and I could not be so selfish as to strand them in mid-winter, and leave them unprovided for. No, I must, I will set my own feelings aside, and do all I can for them."

And so she sang and played her parts, to-night a queen, at to-morrow's matinee a peasant girl, and in the evening, a giddy girl of fashion, or "maid from school;" and returning to her roomed grieved and mourned and prayed, alone.

In a letter to her father written about this time, she said: "I sing at two performances to-day, but my heart is so sad. It is just two months since dear 'Gene died, and it seems as if I had been years alone. How little I thought when I last saw him, the picture of health and happiness, that in less than a week he would be lying in his coffin."

One year later she wrote from San Antonio, Texas, "To-morrow will be the anniversary of my precious husband's death, and it seems almost cruel that I must sing. Oh, my darling father, words cannot tell you how lonely I am. It is just as hard to keep back the tears now, as it was the week he died."

Of the domestic life of Mr. and Mrs. Wetherell much may be said that is tender and true. To him, she was more than Abbott the star, who was to bring him wealth and fame, she was the ideal woman and wife, loving, kind and faithful; and living in her presence day by day for years, he saw many of her charming characteristics which those who met her casually failed to discern; and he soon learned to look upon her as indispensable to his existence. He often said, "But for her hopefulness and faith in the future, I would more than once have lost heart during our first years out; for it was certainly up-hill work to gain a foothold, and overcome the prejudices of Americans who declared that English opera could not prosper."

To his wife, Eugene Wetherell was not as are the husbands of many stage stars, merely a manager who saw in their union the way to a fortune; but the one of all the world that her heart as well as her reason chose; he was king of her little

world, and the love and admiration he lavished upon her for so many years, was repaid by fidelity in word, thought and deed.

In hours of adversity she cheered him, his prosperity she joyfully shared, and stood ever ready to second his efforts in any enterprise he might undertake. So blended were their aims, their tastes, their interests, their souls and lives, that when the sad blow fell which took him from her side she forgot fame, fortune and friends; and only remembered that in this great world she was left alone.

Less than six months before her death she received an offer of marriage from a gentleman of national reputation, possessed of a fortune which exceeded her own; one whose love and admiration would honor any lady, and who saw in her one who would grace his home and adorn society both at home and abroad, the peer of any woman living.

While she appreciated the honor accorded her, she remained a widow, because of her love and respect for the memory of the man who had no small part in making her fortune and winning her fame.

CHAPTER XI.



R. C. H. PRATT had for a number of years been associated with Mr. Wetherell as manager and proprietor, and at her husband's death, Miss Abbott succeeded him as part proprietor, Mr. Pratt assuming the position of sole manager. At the close of the season of '89 and '90 Pratt notified Miss Abbott that when, at the end of the following season, his contract should expire, he would withdraw from the partnership. This decision was not the result of unpleasantness or disagreements between the partners, but Mr. Pratt was weary of continual travel, and preferred a business which would permit him to enjoy the comforts of home and the society of his family.

On the announcement of Mr. Pratt's decision, Miss Abbott began, in her own mind at least, to form plans for a tour of Europe and the provinces with her company, and during her stay in Paris the following summer consulted with European managers regarding her proposed tour.

Before going abroad, however, while looking over the musty stores of a music collector in New York, she found the score of Anne Boleyn, and was at once impressed with the fact that, if

properly staged and presented in English, it would prove a great success. Ere she left the store she had concluded the purchase, and at once arranged with Florio to translate it into English, and prepare a sufficient number of copies for her company.

As companion of her voyage and during her stay in Paris she chose Alice Ellerington, and to the latter the memory of their journey, their visits to places of interest, their drives through the brilliantly lighted streets of the gay city, and more than all else, their hours of conversation when the one was no longer the artist acting a part, but the true-hearted, confiding woman, telling to a sister woman the tale of her early struggles in that same city, and whispering in her ear the story of the heartaches and trials of later days; the memory of all this is sacred. She may live for years, and enjoy the pleasures that gold may buy, but there will never come into her life an experience fraught with more real pleasure than that of her last summer in the society of her honored friend.

One of the first visits made in Paris was to the Louvre, where some of the costumes of the ill-fated Anne Boleyn are on exhibition; then to Worth, where they were to be reproduced. Files of old newspapers and magazines, illustrated histories, everything that could furnish the least information regarding not only the times of Henry VIII. and his unhappy consorts, but the production of the opera more than half a century before, were carefully studied and the information gained put in available form.

Then came long consultations with Worth and Felix, about designs, materials, etc., and it was found necessary in some instances to order the manufacture of fabrics at Lyons.

Arrangements were also perfected with the celebrated Madame La Grange for a series of lessons in dramatical vocalization, and with Madame Bernhardt for rehearsals in musical tragedy.

Few woman are possessed of sufficient executive ability to carry on several enterprises at the same time, but Miss Abbott

was able to look after all the details mentioned, and at the same time find leisure for rest and recreation.

She had for years entertained an intense desire to visit Oberammergau, and witness the production of the Passion Play; and finally, through Miss Ellerington's perseverance, was able to secure a ticket which had been released by some person unable to make the trip.

A ticket purchased in Paris not only secures one's seat at the performance, but lodging and a seat at table during the stay. A journey of thirty-six hours from Paris brought her to the quaint little Bavarian village; which was, as it always is during the presentation of the Passion Play, crowded with visitors. Every house, no matter how humble, in the entire village was full, every bed secured in advance, and any who had been so careless as to defer purchase of tickets and the securing of accommodations until their arrival in the village, were disappointed.

When Miss Abbott reached the town and was conducted to her stopping place, she was surprised to find it an exceedingly small private abode. The room, which she found she was expected to share with two other ladies (English tourists), was on the second floor, access to which was had only by means of a ladder. At this the English ladies rebelled, declaring they could not and would not climb the ladder, a resolution to which Miss Abbott fondly hoped they might adhere, that she might occupy the room alone.

The apartment contained three beds, and as soon as possible after the departure of the tourists, Miss Abbott paid for the three, then climbed the ladder and began a survey of her new quarters. A long ride on a hot day caused her to long for a bath, but she ascertained that no such institution as a public bath existed in the village. Neither were there in her room the usual bowl or basin and pitcher, lodgers being expected to share the family conveniences. By summoning all the German in her vocabulary, putting into practice her knowledge of pantomine, and sprinkling the admixture with a few coins, she was



Emma Abbott as "Queen Anne."

tears and struggles were the stepping stones to her fame, and the foundations of her beautiful womanhood.

The memory of times when she felt the need of money and friends, made her kinder to others similarly situated, while the kindly criticism, words of encouragement and faith in her future, nerved her to greater efforts and higher aspirations.

Sometimes on their long drives she would bury herself in her books, and so absorbed would she become in her new roles, she would strike an attitude, and as she in fancy approached the climax of vocalization, forget her surroundings, and her voice would ring out on high C in a manner startling to spectators and amusing to her companion. One day while lying back on her cushions with closed eyes and calm countenance, she suddenly straightened herself, threw up her hands and screamed, "Judges; have mercy!" betokening the fact that her whole being was absorbed in the fate of Queen Anne. When reminded that a large and apparently appreciative audience surrounded her carriage, she laughed as heartily as did her companion.

The Americans resident in Paris were exceedingly courteous to Miss Abbott and her friend, showing them many graceful attentions, and inviting the former to take part in soirees, musicals, etc. To some of these invitations she was forced to send refusals, but she never was known to deny a request to sing at a patriotic gathering, or charity benefit.

Twice during the summer of '90 Miss Abbott appeared at public gatherings in Paris; once at the meeting of the American Art Club, on the occasion of the presentation of a beautiful silk flag, the gift of Secretary Wanamaker, and again at the reception given by Minister Whitelaw Reid on July 14, the French national fête day which was given to resident and visiting Americans, and the French diplomatic corps. A program had been arranged in which Sibyl Sanderson, the beautiful young American girl, was to participate.

Being in mourning, Miss Abbott did not care to mingle with the guests, yet was too patriotic to refuse an invitation from

the ambassador of her country, so she arranged with her companion to go in street costume, pay their respects to the Minister and Mrs. Reid, and quietly withdraw. As soon, however, as their presence became known, Miss Abbott was called for, so laying aside her wrap, she went forward and gave the aria from Traviata. At its close the house rang with applause, and on her recall she sang "Red, White andBlue." As the strains of the familiar old melody greeted the ears of her countrymen, their patriotic hearts responded, and as the last notes died away cheer after cheer arose, and another song was demanded. This time it was "Last Rose of Summer," sung as none but Abbott ever sang it. There was not an American present that evening who was not proud of the two gifted women who had represented the talent of their native country, the one just entered on what promises a brilliant career, the other having won, and for some years worn, the laurel leaves of Fame.

There were 4,000 people present, some of world-wide reputation; among others Admiral Porter, who complimented Miss Abbott on her charming rendering of our national song, and afterwards remarked "None can dispute Emma Abbott's right to be called 'America's greatest singer.'"

Musical people in Paris, especially professionals and instructors, were quick to discern in Abbott's singing a marked improvement over other years, and her voice revealed qualities which were a revelation to them.

M. Bourgeoise, of the Opera Comique, gave a private musical to Abbott, and she sang for him in costume, with all the details of business, properties, etc., the "Potion Scene" from Romeo and Juliet, and the "Mad Scene" from Hamlet. The great musician went into ecstacies over her singing and acting, and said, "I must have you for a season, and the sooner the better."

Vert, of London, visited Paris on purpose to hear her sing, and he, too, was delighted at prospect of a season with Abbott as star. Had she fulfilled her plan of a European tour with her company, it is probable that Vert would have been her manager.

M. Audran, of Paris, said, "Abbott's singing is beyond anything I had expected to hear, and she should, with her company, make a tour of the continent." M. Audran is the composer of the score for Miss Abbott's new opera, for which just two weeks prior to her death she received the scene plot. It was to be completed during the summer of '91, ready for rehearsal at the beginning of the season. Of and for this opera Miss Abbott talked by day, dreamed by night, and planned continually; and were it not that God's doings are not to be questioned by man, it would seem almost cruel that she must die without seeing her desires fulfilled.

CHAPTER XII.



HE costumes purchased during the summer of '90 by Miss Abbott were not only the most elegant and costly ever bought by her, but exceeded both in cost and beauty any ever seen on any stage. To Worth and Felix for costumes and accessories she paid over one hundred thousand dollars, and at times she hesitated in her orders, saying, "It seems almost wicked to spend so much on a wardrobe." Her ends in this matter were not selfish ones. She costumed her operas elegantly, because the public liked them, and had learned to look for them when her company appeared. As has been said elsewhere, she abhorred sham, and whereas somber effects may be attained in good material without extravagant outlay, brilliancy, if not sham, is necessarily expensive. Many of her dresses were embroidered in gold and silver thread, others had yards upon yards of heavily jeweled garniture, with beads and buttons of real gold plate. Her materials, too, were the most elegant produced by European looms.

She sometimes remarked, "The public patronize me liberally. They pay good prices to hear my operas, and expect



Lucia Bridal Gown.

something in return that is worth their money. Hence I consider it my duty to stage and costume my operas handsomely." Each of the last ten years has brought out costumes handsomer than those of its predecessor, and it seemed that in the season of '90 the acme of beauty had been attained.

The new Trovatore costumes have already been described. Ernani was added to the repertoire in '90, and although its costuming was of a different order from that of Anne Boleyn, it was no less beautiful. The first dress worn in Ernani was christened by Miss Abbott her "lilac dress," and was among her favorites.

The lilac dress was the one chosen in which to robe her after death; although at a less exciting moment, on mature reflection the Juliet tomb dress would have been selected as more appropriate. The lilac gown was one of the greatest works of art ever designed by Worth; and was of white moire antique silk and lilac velvet. The combination was striking, the silk forming the right side of the dress, and the immense court train. The white half bodice crossed from the right shoulder to the waist on the left, joined at point of starting and continuing to the foot, by a panel of lilac velvet. The garniture was embroidery of lilac blossoms, leaves and buds, in nature's colors, purple blossoms on the white, white on the purple, and extended from the waist line on the right side around the train to the foot on the left, and again up the lilac velvet panel to the belt. The extreme foot of the skirt was faced with velvet of leaf green, cut in heart shaped leaves and *appliqued* to the

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NOTE.—The author has, after consultation with some of Miss Abbott's friends, decided to give a full description of the costumes of the last season. They were bought for the public, and the public has a right to know what they are. Moreover, a history of her stage life would be otherwise incomplete. It is also desirable in this connection to correct a false impression which prevails regarding the disposition of her beautiful wardrobe, which is by many believed to have been burned by her order. On the contrary, none of Miss Abbott's clothing was burned, except that worn during her illness, which was according to her physician's order destroyed to prevent possibility of contagion. Her wardrobe, stage and private, is by her will bequeathed to her sister, Mrs. Clark.

skirt. The bodice was low and round in front, with V back, and finished with tiny pipings of purple, white and green velvet, veiled in tulle.

The straight sleeves reached the elbow, and were formed of bands of purple and white velvet piped with green, crossing in diamonds; the interstices being filled with tulle, and finished to match the neck.

The blossoms were made by a noted French flower-maker, and were of satin and velvet; each petal being laid in singly, in the manner known to artists of the needle as *applique.* When one recalls the fact that each cluster of flowers is composed of hundreds of petals, and that hundreds of clusters of the dainty blossoms were used in the ornamentation of the dress, an idea of the work on the gown may be formed. The stems and leaves were embroidered in the most intricate stitches known to art, and that gown alone cost a small fortune.

The full description of this gown has been given, not alone for its artistic beauty, and to please those of Miss Abbott's friends who had not seen it, but to correct the scores of false descriptions and comments upon the same. Newspaper reporters described the funeral robe as "a mass of ribbons, lace and gilt embroidery," then called it a "lilac dress;" and hundreds of her friends at a distance have wondered at the strange taste of those who would array one possessed of so many exquisite gowns, in one so unsuited to the occasion.

Another Ernani gown was of cream satin veiled in *mousseline de soie*, the garniture being an ivy design, traced in gold plated beads. The Ernani bridal gown of ivory satin is almost covered with old Venetian point lace. There is a tablier front on the skirt, and two deep bands of the lace encircle the train. Double puffs of the same head the *antique* sleeves. The bodice and sleeves have a tracery of pearls and silver beads. A satin petticoat with embroidery in pearls and silver beads, was worn with this exquisite gown.

The last act Ernani costume is of black satin brocade, with a laurel leaf design in velvet, and this is one of the gowns the

material for which was woven for Miss Abbott after her own design. The garniture of this is wired jet, made so as to appear independent of the dress, and covers it entire.

A complete new set of dresses were purchased for "Rose of Castile," that being one of Abbott's favorite roles. One christened "The Grape dress," is of heliotrope satin, with garniture of royal purple velvet and gold embroidery. The foot of the skirt and train are a mass of grape vines trailing as carelessly and gracefully as if placed by nature's hand. Vines, tendrils, etc., are traced in gold, while the bunches of ripe fruit are of purple velvet in *applique*, with leaves of green, outlined and veined in gold.

Another dress is of pale blue satin, embroidered in oak leaf design, the leaves being of darker blue, outlined and veined in silver.

The new Martha riding habit is a marvel of beauty, wrought in white satin, jeweled embroidery, and emerald velvet. The skirt of white satin is draped high with a massive jeweled cord and tassels, and reveals the emerald petticoat bordered with puffs of white satin held in place by jeweled bands. The jacket is of emerald, slashed below the waist line, each point jeweled, while the sleeves are composed of puffs of satin and jeweled bands, to match the rest of the costume.

The *Bal Masque* costumes are all of satin and jeweled velvet. One of pale lilac satin has pansy purple bands; another is of baby blue with azuline velvet bands, while the last, of rose satin, is trimmed with bands of apple green. A peasant dress is made entirely of Irish point, and cost an immense sum.

Rehearsals for Anne Boleyn began as soon as Ernani was put on, and to the overwork and fatigue caused by these exhausting rehearsals, with eight performances each week, may be attributed Miss Abbott's physical condition when attacked by pneumonia. She was so completely exhausted that, when prostrated by disease, there was nothing on which to build recovery.

She had determined that her father should see the first presentation of this opera in English, and as Minneapolis was

reached early in the season, the company, especially the principals, were compelled to work very hard to attain perfection in their parts.

On the evening of October 9, Anne Boleyn was put on at the Grand Opera in Minneapolis, and was witnessed by a house packed to the doors. None who witnessed her triumphs of that evening and listened to her mimic death-song, dreamed that ere two months had passed, that glorious voice would be heard no more on earth. The audience was partially dazed. Some thought the charming air one of the strange interpolations with which the songstress was accustomed to surprise her audience; others contended the air was not "Sweet Home," and a few knew the truth, that it was the original air from whence our own "Sweet Home" was derived; but all agreed on one point, that the prima donna never sang more divinely, never acted a part more grandly, than on that occasion; and the fact that although the hour of midnight was not far off, and that a fierce storm raged without, the audience tendered her an encore, than which no heartier one was ever heard in the Grand Opera House, betokened her hold upon the sympathies of her listeners. Cheered by the applause and enthused by the recall, she responded in the sweetest tones she ever sang in Minneapolis, and it was a fitting adieu to the people she loved well.

Her reception on that evening was grateful to her. The week had not been in all respects what it should have been, and the vacant seats on two evenings had served to dispirit even the plucky little woman that she was. Worn with frequent and long rehearsals, and the responsibility which she always assumed when a new opera was to be put on, wearied with an afternoon performance of Martha, and saddened by incidents which during the days preceding had opened anew the wounds caused by Mr. Wetherell's death; she entered her dressing room on Saturday evening "rather blue," as she said. But her melancholy gave way when to her inquiry, "How is the house?" a member of the company replied, "It is almost full now," and, thenceforth she was as gay as a bird.



Emma Abbott as "Violetta."

On Sunday afternoon in discussing the performance with the author, she said, "I shall never forget yesterday and last night. The matinee audience was appreciative and good-natured, but last evening the audience seemed especially sympathetic and kind. There were awkward waits and blunders, and yet those in front seemed disposed to condone all, and remember only the beauties of the opera. Really," she continued, "we ought to have had a month longer for preparation, but I was determined that pa should witness the first presentation in English. He is growing old, you know, and all these little things please him. I never learn a new part but I think of him, bless his dear heart, and how faithfully he used to work, how patient he used to be with me in teaching me my first concert numbers. It may seem childish to say so, but truly I never have heard music that sounded so grand to me as the melodies he used to play on his violin."

Two of the dresses worn on that occasion were particularly beautiful, one the character, or Queen Anne; the other a charming bit of drapery in which she went to the guillotine. The first was of moss-green velvet and shrimp-pink satin. This is in colors and design an exact copy of the Queen Anne dress on exhibition in the Louvre, but its cost is many times that of the royal garment.

The body of the dress is of the moss-colored velvet, and the garniture is something never before seen on any stage costume. The design (an intricate one) is cut away in the velvet *appliqued* on the pink satin. An idea of the work on this costume may be obtained when it is stated that the margin of each design is so closely embroidered with self-colored silk that it resembles the hard-woven fabrics of Queen Anne's time. This *applique* or cut-away work, forms a half-yard border on the skirt and train.

CHAPTER XIII.



MMA ABBOTT had the honor of "opening" or dedicating more opera houses than had any other singer in the world. And it was an honor, won by the extreme generosity, kindness, endeavor to please, and sterling womanhood, for which she had gained a reputation.

When a man, or syndicate of men, has brought to completion a house erected for the entertainment of the public, he looks upon that house with pride, and in selecting a person to perform the opening or dedication rites, wishes to find a star possessed not only of artistic skill, gracious manner and comely appearance, but of a name known and honored for beauty of character; a name which cannot by any means be associated with reproach.

There are such in every profession, yet they are none too common; and there are those who attain all possible perfection in their chosen art, whose names no one would care to associate with an object they love, or in which they are interested. Therefore it is not wonderful that during the thirteen years of its existence, the Emma Abbott Opera Co. opened thirty-five beautiful opera houses, and temples devoted to Music and the

Drama, costing all the way from fifty thousand to half a million dollars. The first opera house dedicated by Miss Abbott was the pretty little theater at Waterloo, Iowa, in the autumn of 1878, with Chimes of Normandy.

In the fall of 1880 the company opened the pretty little theater at Springfield, Ohio. The house was packed, every seat being filled, and the aisles crowded with chairs. Before the curtain rose Miss Abbott was called to the front and presented with a lovely floral harp, and a dainty silk flag. When called on to respond in a speech, she sang "The Red, White and Blue." The audience realized the appropriateness of the response, and cheered her to the echo.

Romeo and Juliet was cast for the evening performance, and the principals, Castle and Abbott, were tendered a perfect ovation. In the "Balcony Scene" they were recalled again and again, and after wearied with repetitions, both were called before the curtain.

At the opening of a theatre in Virginia, a series of misfortunes occurred which would have driven any other star frantic, and inspired the company with dissatisfaction. The scenery refused to work properly, and it seemed as if every detail was possessed of a spirit of evil.

At the close of Act I. the drop curtain refused to fall, and notwithstanding repeated efforts to control it, it remained stubborn. By a series of signals and hurried words, none of which were discovered by the audience, the prima donna recommenced the *ensemble* which ended the act, and herself led a march into the wings. So gracefully was it accomplished, that few, if any, in the audience mistrusted that it wasn't "down in the plot."

Later in the evening the lights were suddenly extinguished, and although the situation caused a wait of a minute or two, the orchestra changed tactics, and a moment later Miss Abbott's voice was heard in the strains of Offenbach's serenade. When the lights were again turned on, the thread of the opera was taken up, and proceeded smoothly to the end.

During their last season of four months the company opened two beautiful edifices, the first being the Metropolitan Theater at Grand Forks, Dakota; the other the "New Grand Opera," at Ogden City, Utah.

At Grand Forks "Martha" was the opera cast, and Abbott, indeed, as did all the principals, received a continued ovation. The event was one of the most brilliant of its kind, just such an one as the West can bring about when it feels inclined. Tickets to the amount of ten thousand dollars were sold; and the costumes of the ladies present would have done credit to such an occasion in any city of the United States. The opening address was made by Dakota's able governor, Hon. John Miller, after which the curtain was rung up for the performance. Of this the *Plaindealer*, a local paper, says:

"The first appearance of the company was greeted by a wild burst of applause, and as the queen of opera came on the stage, it was deafening. During the performance Miss Abbott was encored again and again. Her solos were a revelation to many who heard her. Such delicate, melodious music, and yet so powerful and wonderful a voice. Miss Annandale was another favorite, and William Pruette, as Plunkett, won the admiration of the audience. The chorus was a magnificent combination, the voices of the singers being trained to oneness of expression which is remarkable.

"They sang with a degree of spirit and animation which showed their whole attention was given up to the work they undertook. The different incidents, scenes and expressions of the different portions of the opera were brought out with a vividness which made the performance most charming. The orchestra, too, was in perfect keeping with the light character of the entire performance, the music blending and harmonizing delightfully with the voices of the singers. The dress worn by Miss Abbott in the first act was the most magnificent costume ever seen in the city, and attracted the admiration of the ladies by its splendor."

So pleased were they with the performance on the opening

night, that the management voiced appreciation in a beautiful, massive floral tribute decked with ribbons, which was forwarded to Miss Abbott at San Francisco, reaching there in time for the opening night at the Baldwin. That evening the King of the Sandwich Islands, with his *suite*, attended the performance, occupying a box at the right of the stage. Miss Abbott honored the royal guest by placing the floral gift from Grand Forks in front of his box.

In a letter to the author, Manager Geo. H. Broadhurst, of Grand Forks, says, "Both patronage and performance exceeded my most sanguine expectations;" and follows with this beautiful tribute to the dead songstress:

"That the death of Emma Abbott, who was the idol of the West, and who was loved as much for her gracious womanliness as for her power as an *artiste*, will leave a void never to be filled, is a fact apparent to all who know the reverence in which she is held. Miss Abbott's one visit to Grand Forks was sufficient to establish her a decided favorite in the hearts of the people; who will never cease to be grateful for the privilege of that one performance and its pleasant memories. Like the perfume of the withered rose; the flower has departed, but her holy influence remains."

There may have been others of her profession who have done as much, but few have done more in the way of bestowals which were intended to render happy the inmates of charity hospitals, children's homes, homes for the aged, and even those who, for transgressions of the law, are deprived of liberty and association of friends.

Christmas, of '85, the inmates of two western penitentiaries were gladdened by boxes of gifts from Mr. and Mrs. Wetherell. For the men there were warm scarfs, for the women a neatly made white apron for Sundays, and for all a pound box of candy. The holidays of '86 and '87 saw boxes on their way to Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago, and Jacksonville, Ill., filled to overflowing with gifts for those who had no hope of a remembrance from St. Nicholas.

Christmas of '88 the company was in California, and several boxes of appropriate gifts were sent to charitable institutions in San Francisco and Sacremento. The surgeon in charge of a California hospital wrote her as follows :

"I am sure it would have done your soul good, and amply repaid you for your expense and trouble, could you have seen the brightened countenances of our patients, as the baskets of luscious fruit were brought into the different wards, and when they were told that each patient was to have a whole basket from which at such intervals as I might see fit they were to be supplied, their delight knew no bounds.

"Still greater was their enthusiam when informed that the fruit, in all several barrels, was the gift of the charming woman who, less than a week before, had sung a song in each ward ; and the ejeculations of 'God bless her,' 'Heaven keep her,' and 'May the good Father grant her every blessing,' were as fervent, heartfelt prayers as were ever offered in your behalf. To these I add my own, that you may be spared to enjoy as many blessings as your generous heart has showered upon others."

The Sisters' hospital, in Boston, was similarly remembered by the same generous soul, and in acknowledgment the Mother Superior wrote : "The delicacies for our sick ones came just in time, and I know it would have made you very happy to have witnessed their appreciation, and heard their expressions of gratitude. May the dear Jesus reward you as words of mine cannot do, and may the blessing of the Mother of Christ abide upon you at all times."

One May day an immense box of roses, and lilacs was sent to a Philadelphia hospital, and one of the nurses afterward said : "I think those flowers did more for the recovery of our patients than all the medicine and nursing we have given them." The matron in charge sent her a beautifully worded letter of thanks which is given in full.

"To our poor sufferers shut in as they are, deprived of sunshine, the fragrance of flowers, and songs of birds, your box

of beautiful blossoms came as a benediction from Heaven. Some of the dear souls closed their eyes, clasping the flowers tightly in their hands, and I am sure their fragrance brought to them memories of childhood, perhaps of a dear home, and fond parents; and they were loth to open their eyes, lest the fancy be dispelled. Long after the flowers are faded, dear Miss Abbott, the remembrance of your generous deed will remain with us, and we all join in a prayer that when hours of pain come to you, your own heart may be gladdened by the thoughtfulness of dear friends, and may blossoms as beautiful as those you sent us, be placed about your couch to cheer you."

In the winter of '90 "Uncle Ben Baker" died, and friends set at work to raise means to place a life-size painting of the dear old gentleman in the reception room of the Actor's Association. Just before Christmas Miss Abbott sent the last hundred dollars required to pay for the picture, and at the same time, an equal sum to "Aunt Louisa Eldridge" for the children's Christmas.

In remembrance of these generous deeds, Harrison Grey Fisk, editor of the *New York Dramatic Mirror*, paid her a graceful tribute, worthy of a place here but unfortunately not available.

The newsboy's association of Detroit was remembered with a present of one hundred dollars for their Christmas tree, and the following testimonial was received the day before Miss Abbott's death:

"The Newsboys of Detroit, *three thousand strong*, send you a Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year, and wish you bushels and bushels of success."

CHAPTER XIV.



NE of the most marked characteristics of Emma Abbott's nature was filial love. Although separated from them for years at a time, her love for her father and mother was as tender and sincere as when she was dependent upon them for all she received. From her father she inherited her musical talent, and this was a strong tie between them.

In talking of her father with a friend not long before her death, she said, "Poor pa! he gets downhearted and blue, because all his ambitions were not fulfilled, and he will say to me, 'Well, Em', if I have made a failure, you are a success.' To be sure, pluck, health and talent have helped me, and I am said to be a self-made woman; but I do not forget that if I am a success, it is because he gave me the start toward it. My musical talent, energy and determination are all inherited, and my parents deserve credit for much that I am."

Nor is it strange that between the baby girl whose very soul was music, possessed of an ear so correct that after once hearing she could repeat any ordinary melody, and her father, himself a teacher and lover of music, there should be formed an attachment that would grow with the years.



Emma Abbott as Anne Boleyn.
Last Act, in which the unfortunate Queen goes to the guillotine.

And when the pupil had outdone the teacher, and attained heights of which he had only dreamed; when from admiring him and striving to become his equal, she had become not only the object of his adoration and praise, but the pride of American hearts and music-lovers everywhere; that filial love grew stronger; and she never forgot that to her father's early teaching she owed much that she attained. Said she on one occasion, "I never enjoyed any ovations tendered me more than I enjoyed the applause of the audiences that filled halls and schoolhouses in small towns, to hear our concerts; pa with violin, I with guitar, and when we could strike one, a cabinet organ or melodeon."

From the time she left home for New York to study under Errani, to that of her death, her letters to her parents voice the affection of a constant, faithful heart. Scores of them contain the following sentences or those of similar import: "I never cease to love and pray for you." "No matter how long a time before we meet, or what distance separates us, your loving Emma prays always for your health and happiness." "I do not write regularly. I live in such a whirl that to do so is impossible, but you must write me every Sunday, because your letters do me so much good." A letter to her father in 1878, says, "I regret to hear you are not well. I fear you are overworking. How I wish, my darling father, it were in my power to give you a life of rest and ease."

Another letter bearing date of November, 1889, eleven years later than the one just quoted, says, "One of the happiest thoughts of my life is that it lies in my power to keep you without work or care on your part. I desire you to have the best of everything, clothes, food, a nice, comfortable room; perfect ease, and time to do whatever you like."

Another of recent date contains the following, "I don't want you to work or worry. Just remember your Emma loves you, prays for you daily, and wishes to render you perfectly happy."

Her love for her brothers and her sister was equally marked. It was in Montreal she heard of her eldest brother's death, and

was apparently established. At each rehearsal, she had prefaced the "dagger act" with the assurance that she would do them no harm, and the promise of a box of chocolate creams, as soon as the curtain should ring down. In the evening, however, she omitted this assurance, trusting to their confidence for good and proper behavior. As she approached them, one began to tremble, and as the knife glittered in the light, gave a shriek, jumped from the couch, and vanished into the wings, followed in short meter by his little sister. The performance went on, but neither performers nor audience, were greatly impressed with the solemnity usual during the remainder of the act.

She loved and reverenced age, too, and a many a man and woman feeble with infirmities of years, have received tickets to the opera, and a note, saying, "A carriage will call for you." These, like the children she loved so well, were not from the ranks of society, but represented the humbler walks of life.

Among those who mourn her loss is an old man in St. Louis, who sells papers, blacks shoes, and sometimes adds to his stock in trade a basket of apples or pop-corn. One day some years ago, while walking down West Locust street with her husband, she was so unfortunate as to lose an overshoe in the crossing mud. A trio of newsboys, who saw the affair, laughed heartily as they saw Mr. Wetherell remove his glove to recover the lost shoe. The old gentleman was standing on the corner with his basket of apples, and seeing Mr. Wetherell start back, said, "Keep your gloves on, sir,.keep them on;" and in a moment more was gallantly replacing the rubber on the owner's foot. Like the rascals many of their profession are, the boys helped themselves from his store of fruit, and ran out of sight.

True to her generous heart, she called across the street, "Never mind, let the boys go ; poor little chaps, they don't get such apples every day, nor do I, so let me have two." The fruit vender crossed with his stock, from which she selected two of the best, and stored them away in Mr. Wetherell's coat pocket ; then took from her purse a dollar, saying, as she gave

it to the man who had assisted her, "Keep the change to pay for the Newsies' feast; and, 'Gene, write out a pass for this man for to-night at the opera, and tell the boys to give him two good seats."

That evening when the performance was over, and she was leaving the house, the old man and his daughter, a young girl, stood at the exit waiting to thank her for the pleasure her generosity had given them. Each year thereafter she found a way to send him a ticket to the opera. "Why," said she, "I can sing better when I see him sitting as he always does in the front row, with upturned face, drinking in every word as it falls from the lips of the singers."

An old apple woman (colored) in Baltimore, has enjoyed an Abbott matinee during every engagement of the company in that city for five years, the ticket of admission being furnished by Abbott herself.

In religious belief Miss Abbott was decidedly liberal in the best sense of the word. She was a member in good standing of the Congregational church, but when on the road usually attended service wherever she could most conveniently do so. If a church were within easy walking distance of her hotel, that was usually her choice; if, however, she called a cab or carriage, she frequently instructed the driver to "Go straight up or down the street, and when you reach a church, stop."

Hence she had in the course of her career heard sermons of every faith and belief, and as her will shows, had "particularly enjoyed divine service" in many, and these churches receive, through her generosity, ten thousand dollars each.

Religious sentiment was strong in her nature, and when in trouble, whether from bodily or mental affliction, she always turned for comfort to a "Heavenly Father" in whose love she trusted, and by whose judgment she was willing to abide. Often when a week's work had been more than usually exhausting, friends would urge her to forego the church service on Sunday, she replied, "I know you mean all right, and advise me as you believe for my good; but, my dear, you are taking from me the

the dearest privilege of my life; robbing me of the source of of my greatest comfort. When I attend church on Sunday, no matter how humble the edifice or how uncultured the speaker, I receive a blessing; I get into a right frame of mind; and receive strength to overcome temptations, bear affliction, meet reverses. Indeed, I could not be happy without this."

After Mr. Wetherell's death she adhered more rigidly than ever to this observance of the Sabbath, and on her last Sunday in Minneapolis, said to the author, "My dear, I listened to such a comforting sermon this morning. The minister spoke from that beautiful text, 'Let not your heart be troubled.' It was just the balm my poor lonely heart needed."

Mr. and Mrs. Wetherell had been owners of much valuable real estate, but had never built or furnished a residence and called it home. Mr. Wetherell preferred hotel life, but after his death his wife longed for a place of retirement, a place where when weary she might rest alone if she chose, or surrounded by the members of her own family, father, mother, brother and sister. After some discussion she decided upon Chicago, the city of her birth, although San Francisco, New York and Washington had about equal attractions.

The fact, however, that most of her immediate family resided in Chicago had much to do with her decision. The formal plans for her home had not been drawn, but in her own mind she had formed a plan of a large residence, containing *suites* after the manner of our best hotels. These were to be so arranged that each member of the family was to have a *suite* which when desirable might be shut off from communication with the others. Besides the private apartments, there were to be a general parlor, a music or entertainment hall, and a *suite* for guests. The house would have been under way ere this time if Miss Abbott had lived, and, furnished with all modern conveniences and the most artistic appointments, would have been an ornament to Chicago.

Here when her seasons were finished, she might conclude her preparations for a journey or season abroad, or if she chose

rest for a season or longer. This was also to be Rosa's permanent home. The erection and furnishing of this "Abbott" home was one of the three things for which she most desired to live one year longer.

Another was the completion of the Wetherell monument to be erected in memory of her husband, and which was already well under way at the time of her death. Its cost is ninety thousand dollars, and it is one of the finest in the country. Within the monument is an urn made as a receptacle for her own ashes.

The third enterprise she so earnestly longed to carry out, was the "staging" and "putting on" of her new opera, by Audran, which is spoken of elsewhere in this work.

CHAPTER XV.



N 1881 Mr. Wetherell advertised in a New York city daily for chorus girls, and among those who responded was Alice Ellerington, of Jersey City. Miss Ellerington had acquired considerable popularity as a Scotch ballad singer, her clear, sympathetic voice being especially adapted to that line of concert work, Her voice and general appearance passed muster, and she became a member of the Abbott chorus.

Alice Ellerington's life had its turned down page, and in her case sorrow had softened the nature, subdued in a degree the will, and developed her graces. Miss Abbott soon noted her gentleness of disposition, her patience under criticism, her ladylike demeanor, and little by little reached out her arms to her, taking her into her confidence and love, until when the sad blow came which left her a widow, she turned to Alice (as she always tenderly called her) for sympathy, counsel and companionship. When, in response to what seemed the command of duty, Miss Ellerington resigned her position to care for an invalid relative, Miss Abbott sent a message, saying "Come back to me ; I cannot live without you," she quickly responded, and from that day was the singer's most trusted friend, the repository of her confidences, to whom when her heart seemed



Last Act Ruy Blas.

ready to break under its load of sorrow, she could unbosom her griefs, to whom she could talk of her ambitions, and her hopes for the future, knowing naught would be revealed.

To Alice she entrusted the care of her magnificent jewels, and papers of value while on their journey abroad, and at her death, to Alice, tried and found faithful in the execution of the slightest commission, she bequeathed the custody of all her letters, all her private property, music, operas and operatic scores, many of which were as dear to her as if they were her children; assured that the confidences contained in those letters would be as sacred from intrusion as is the tomb where her ashes repose.

Alice, assisted by Miss Abbott's faithful attendant, Rosa, relieved by Nellie Franklin, another of the singer's favorites, remained in the sickroom during the five days and nights of suffering which marked the close of her life. Their hands soothed the fevered brow, administered the few remedies, and the little nourishment the sufferer was able to take, and prompted by love and devotion, they kept watch while others slept. Not that others were unwilling to bear the toil, and share the burden of the sick room, but all save these two were fulfilling their regular duties behind the footlights, and to them sleep and rest were imperative.

To Alice the invalid looked for the verdict of the physicians after each careful test of respiration, pulse and temperature, and in her ear whispered the few requests regarding the end. One of these referred to preparing and robing the body for the long and silent journey homeward, and she asked that this service be performed by loving hands.

And it was done by that trio who had served her so faithfully and so well in life, to whom her inanimate form was sacred. Scores of times had the same hands arrayed her for her roles on the stage; on several occasions they had attired her in that same gown of white and lilac, her favorite dress; they had often brushed her brown hair, and encased the feet in the same white satin slippers; but at other times she had been full of life and gayety; now she was strangely still.

The history of that five days may be told in a few pages, but to those who watched by the bedside, to the anxious members of her company and to her father, mother, brothers and sister, two thousand miles away, waiting for a word of hope or discouragement, each hour seemed an eternity.

On the night of December 29, the company was billed to open the new opera house at Odgen, Utah, with the Rose of Castile. The house was just completed, and the walls were not thoroughly dry, but the star's dressing room was made comfortable by sufficient heat, and blanketing walls and windows. By accident, however, a window became lowered while Miss Abbott was disrobed, and she was at once thrown into a terrible chill, from which it seemed impossible to recall her. She had been indisposed for several days, and had taken immense doses of quinine as a bracer, to carry her through a series of colds, each one of which seemed to settle more deeply upon her.

The excitement of the occasion may have added slightly to the nervous phase of the trouble, as when ready for Act I. she was called upon to respond to an address of welcome by the editor of the *Ogden Standard.* This called for a hurried change of costume, and another at the close of her own address, which rendered her somewhat nervous. Both Editor Cannon and Miss Abbott were received by the large audience with hearty applause, and, when silence was restored, she, in clear tones and with winning smile, said:

"*Dear Friends—I may say very dear friends, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your more than kind welcome. I have long wished to visit your city, and now that I find myself in your beautiful temple of art, I am astonished and delighted at what I see. It has been my good fortune to open opera houses in many cities, but never have I sung in one more magnificent, more elaborate than this. I am happy to be with you, and, hoping that it may not be the last time, I will close by saying with Juliet, 'Stay but a little, and I will come again.'*"

The *Standard*, of Dec. 30, gave the following notice of the performance: "Shortly after 8 p. m. the orchestra rendered a brief overture, the curtain rose, and Frank J. Cannon, editor *Ogden Standard*, appeared to make a speech of greeting and introduction. Referring in terms of deserved compliment to the founders and proprietors of the establishment, delivered a glowing tribute to Mr. Whittaker, the architect, and speaking in commendatory terms of all who had taken part in making the structure a success, he proceeded to speak of the star of the evening in choice and appropriate language. At this juncture Miss Abbott appeared, and was warmly received. She was elegantly attired, and exhibited none of the weariness she must have felt through the constant work lately undergone; work in which travel by rail has formed no insignificant factor. Her response was quite brief, but in well chosen words, and evinced a heartiness and friendliness which was thoroughly reciprocated. Both speeches were fittingly punctuated with applause. * * * Forty choristers sang the opening number, and in the midst of their melody, "Elvira," in the person of Miss Abbott, tripped gaily upon the stage, and received another rapturous greeting. From first to last her work was a charm to all listeners; from the opening solo up to and including her special and conspicuous flights of vocalism in the *tout ensemble*, the audience were enchained with that peculiar form of delight which comes of 'a liking only fully gratified.' It was soon apparent to those who had never seen the prima donna before, that they were beholding high-class acting, as well as listening to a high class of singing, that has made the singer a name, a fame and a fortune second to a very few. Those who were acquainted with the *artiste* and her methods, knew, without waiting, that, even if she were divested of the wonderful faculty of song she possesses, she would still shine as an actress of peculiar and altogether attractive power.

"When she trills, it seems like the murmur of aspen leaves in the groves of Paradise, wafted upon wavelets of perfumed air; and her rounded roulades and caroled cadences sound to the

imaginative mind and reverent ear closely akin to the vespers of the angelic host when first they voiced their songs of praise in the Garden of the Gods. In all seriousness, Miss Abbott has a range of compass and such an elastic control of her vocal powers, throughout embellished with excellent intonation and splendid phrasing, all set to such pleasing and plenteous melody, and is so comely in person and attractive in manner that we have no hesitation in crowning her as "the dimpled queen of song." Ogden is pleased to welcome her, and hopes to greet her yet many times ere the curtain is finally rung down upon this fleeting life."

The *Standard* of Wednesday, December 31, says of Bohemian Girl: "The lovers of music and song were served with a rare treat yesterday afternoon and evening, being favored at both performances with the "Last Rose of Summer" by that gifted woman. Those who heard her sing this charming song at the matinee and again in the evening were doubly pleased. The thunders of applause which greeted her showed the feeling which the people had for her and for the much loved song.

* * * Miss Abbott sang with excellent voice, and the sweetness of her tone was a surprise even to her friends. She was warmly encored.

"At Tuesday's *matinee* the opera Martha was given, and as Miss Abbott made her appearance on the stage she was greeted with rapturous applause. From first to last she charmed her listeners with her volumes of heavenly music. As Martha Miss Abbott appeared at her best, and from the opening solo to her wonderful flights of vocalism, held her audience almost spell-bound, and only when the voice had ceased did any one dare to breathe, and then the applause shook the building. The chief interest of the opera was, of course, the singing of "The Last Rose of Summer." This song has made Abbott famous, and her name will always be linked with it. Her by-play in Martha is simply delightful in its piquant grace and abandon. She fairly carries the audience with her. The performance was a triumph, and thoroughly appreciated by listeners."



Emma Abbott as Norma.

On returning to her hotel at the close of the performance, she found herself in a raging fever, and to allay her thirst drank large draughts of iced milk. To this Rosa, her attendant, objected, but she would not be denied, because, as she said, "I seem to be on fire, and this is all that cools my blood." This chilled her stomach, already rendered sensitive by the quinine, and caused it thereafter to reject the slightest quantity either of food or medicine. On the next morning Miss Abbott was quite ill, but decided to go to Salt Lake City early in the day that she might obtain all the rest possible before the evening's performance.

When she entered the opera house that Tuesday evening, it was evident to all who were familiar with her habits and manners, that she was indeed very ill, and all at once besought her to remain off the stage, return to her hotel, and place herself in the hands of a physician. "But I must not disappoint these people," said she, "I was in bad voice when here before, and to-night I must redeem myself. I cannot forego this performance, but, oh, I am so very ill." She sank prostrate several times while making up, scarcely uttering a word during the entire time; a fact which betokened the severity of her illness. When slightly indisposed she was extremely nervous, and easily irritated, talking continually about her indisposition. But on this occasion she was satisfied with anything, and breathed not a word of complaint. At intervals she would cast a look of agony upon those around her, and shake her head as if in mute despair.

When dressed she was fairly carried through the wings, and just as she made her entrance, braced herself, saying, "I must sing if I die for it." All look of suffering passed from her face, and in its place there came an expression almost saint-like in its beauty. The manager, Mr. Pratt, his wife, and Miss Annandale occupied a box, and to them the fact that Miss Abbott was suffering intense agony, although her rendering of the part of Elvira was perfectly charming, was evident. There was something in her face, her manner, and in the quality of

her voice which seemed more than human, and seemed to inspire them with terror.

Manager Pratt left the box at the close of the act, and finding his fears confirmed went at once after Dr. Pinkerton, who accompanied him to the theater. A hasty inquiry into her condition revealed even then the fact that she was alarmingly ill. Of her condition at that hour Dr. Pinkerton writes: "I reached the theater just before the second act. She complained of a terrible pain in the left side, and informed me that she had a severe chill at five that afternoon. Her respirations were forty per minute, pulse 120, temperature 104½°F. I advised her to have her manager acquaint the audience with the fact that she was alarmingly ill, and that she be taken at once to her hotel. This she persistently refused to do, saying she must sing that night. The people who witnessed that performance will probably never forget her sufferings, as it was apparent to all that she was dangerously ill."

When the united pleadings of Dr. Pinkerton and her manager failed to persuade her to "ring down" for the evening, the doctor did all in his power to brace her for the work, and arrest the disease. A bottle of champagne was brought, and given by the teaspoonful, and when the theater closed that evening, although all were aware of her illness, not one dreamed that their favorite songstress had sung her last note on earth.

From the first the physicians had little hope of saving their patient on account of her inability to retain either food or medcine, and yet they left no means untried. They watched carefully every symptom, and spent hours at her side.

The expressions of opinions by physicians at remote distances to the effect that Miss Abbott was drugged to death by hypodermics of morphia sulphate are as unkind as they are unwise and unprofessional. Doctors Pinkerton and Bascom refrained from the use of hypodermics until assured beyond a doubt that Miss Abbott was past all chance of recovery, and only resorted to them at that time that her last hours might be robbed of the terrible agony which sometimes characterizes the end with

victims of pneumonia. Both assured Miss Ellerington that it was their last resort to give their patient rest and a peaceful death.

On Thursday, when visited by her physician, Miss Abbott, using an expression common among the profession regarding future dates, remarked to him, "Doctor, I think I am booked." "Booked! for where, Miss Abbott?" "For Paradise, doctor." To this the doctor replied that should she relinquish hope of recovery his task would be more difficult, and said, "We rely much upon your courage and hopefulness to carry you through." "Ah, doctor," said she, "I shall sing my next song in Heaven. But I'm not afraid to die, doctor, I'm not afraid."

All day Friday the symptoms remained about the same; the patient suffering the most intense agony. To her medical adviser's inquiry where she suffered most, she answered, "Everywhere, everywhere; such dreadful pain." The one thing most feared by her physicians and dreaded by herself was delirium, but although nearly always present in pneumonia, Miss Abbott's mind remained clear from the first until the end. From the beginning her hearing was impaired, and she often asked her physicians if that would return in the event of recovery.

On Saturday she hovered between life and death, and was told of her precarious condition. Her reply was, "I know it." She remembered the day and date, and her custom of sending on Saturday of each week a check to each of her aged parents. She was too weak to raise her head, but asked to be supported while she affixed her signature for the last time. She realized this, and said, "That is the last check I shall ever sign." "No, no, Miss Abbott," replied her private secretary, Mr. Consadine, "not the last. I only wish I might become possessor of all you will yet sign." "Ah, no, Dan, that is my last; for my dear old father."

Now and then she would remark, "To-morrow will be Sunday, Sunday," betokening the fact that she remembered the date of her husband's death. When asked by the physician if she wished to transact any business, she replied, "I would like

if it were God's will to live another year. I wanted to see my dear husband's monument completed; then, too, during the coming year I had hoped to build a home for my family, where all might live together, and where when I needed rest I might retire. Then there is my new opera; I was having it written especially for my company and myself, and I would so much like to live to put that on. These three things I have greatly desired, but, doctor, if it is God's will, I am willing to die."

After this she seemed to be thinking of the company, and would say, "On Monday the company will go on—will go on, and I—must—wait—here," showing that she even yet hoped for recovery. When the pain could no longer be endured without greatly hastening the end, Dr. Pinkerton suggested a hypodermic of morphia, that she might gain a little rest; she consented. On Sunday morning about three o'clock Miss Ellerington noted the commencement of the peculiar rattling sound in the breathing, which to prevent her from giving way to grief the physician attributed to a breaking up of mucous in the throat, but to Alice's loving ear it foretold the approach of the end, and as she leaned forward, hoping her fears might prove groundless, the patient noted the movement and inquired the cause. Now and then she would turn to the patient watcher at her side and say, "Alice, dear, pray, pray that I—may—live—through this day and this night; Alice—this—day—and —this—night." At noon on Sunday Miss Ellerington was sent to her room for a little rest, the physician saying, "You will be needed to-night." She remained absent only a few hours, her watch at the invalid's side being replaced by Mrs. Pratt, Miss Vernon and Miss Franklin. At night Dr. Pinkerton remained in an adjoining room, while Mr. and Mrs. Pratt, Miss Ellerington, and Rosa also rested near, leaving, during the early part of the night, Miss Franklin and Miss Vernon on watch. Soon after midnight Miss Ellerington joined them, and detected in the center of the right hand a spot which was icy cold. To her it seemed significant, and as she noted the chill spreading and taking possession of the entire hand, her heart sank within



Abbott and Castle as Romeo and Juliet.

her, and still she tried to hope. The sufferer caught only snatches of rest, and so earnestly longed for the coming day that long before the first streak of light appeared, she asked that the curtains might be pinned back to admit the first rays of dawn. About four o'clock Miss Ellerington noted a change, and called Dr. Pinkerton, to whom Miss Abbott said, "A wonderful change has taken place. What it is I cannot tell, but it is a wonderful change." To his inquiry concerning the pain, she replied, "It is all gone—all gone." Slowly but surely she sank, rousing only when some one called her name. Miss Ellerington and Mrs. Pratt both said to her, "Don't you know me; can you see me?" to which there was no response. Mrs. Pratt said, "It's Addie, don't you know Addie?" "Oh! yes, Addie," replied the dying woman, and smiled. "Alice" and "Addie" were the last names she ever uttered.

On being asked if she wished the company called, she answered, "The company—all—all—" Every member responded, and as they filled the hall and doorways, naught could be heard but sobs of anguish. Michelena, Pruette, Broderick, McCord and Consadine, broke down, and cried like children; and the weeping of the ladies formed a sad accompaniment. The sound of the crying reached the ears of her they all so dearly loved, so deeply mourned, and with an effort to look at each she rallied for an instant and said distinctly, "*I'm—not afraid.*"

CHAPTER XVI.



LL was over, and in that room and hallway, was more than one, who, could her life have been ransomed, would gladly have given their own. But all that loving hearts could do was done. Prayers for the recovery of their leader had been offered by all, even by some who were unused to pray; but Providence had otherwise ordained, and naught remained to comfort the bereaved ones but memories of her womanliness, her goodness of heart, her kindness toward them.

As they lingered, loth to leave what to them seemed the sacred atmosphere which she had breathed, one and another recalled pleasant incidents of their associations. Pruette who had been a member of the company for ten years said, "There was but one Emma Abbott. Say to all that she was one of the truest, best women that ever lived."

Michelena, the tenor, whose voice has won admiration wherever heard, in speaking of their association both professional and social, remarked, "I loved her with my whole heart. Not with a love born of passion, or sensual admiration, but for her goodness, her purity of soul. She so carried herself at all

times, whatever the role she filled, that no man could associate with her one impure thought. To me she seemed a pattern of modesty, fidelity, purity, and goodness."

Broderick, who had been with her company for ten years, said of her, "She was my ideal woman. Tender, sympathetic as a child, she was yet firm in principle, generous at all times, yet always dispensing her charity with a wise hand. None of us will ever find another leader whom we will love and trust as we did Emma Abbott." Miss Annandale spoke of her with exceeding tenderness, and in terms of the highest admiration, as did each member of the company.

The citizens of Salt Lake City did all in their power to show their esteem for the dead singer, and numerous floral tributes were brought from that far western city to the resting place in Graceland. A beautiful lyre from Mr. Burton, the manager of the theatre where she appeared for the last time; an anchor from the hotel where she died; an arch and crown from the Salt Lake Choral society, and a huge bunch of lilies-of-the-valley, from Mr. Johnson, local correspondent of the *New York Dramatic Mirror*, beside the tributes from the company, and Mr. and Mrs. Pratt.

In the little parlor at Hotel Templeton, the company held their own private funeral; and while there was no attempt at decoration or display of any kind, every one present was a sincere mourner. The services were brief; the company first singing, "Father, Hear Our Prayer," followed by a prayer and remarks by Rev. McNeece, of the Salt Lake Presbyterian church. Then with choked voices they sang, "Farewell, True Heart," "Nearer My God to Thee," and "Home, Sweet Home."

Only a few weeks before, Miss Abbott herself had sung "Nearer My God to Thee" in church at Minneapolis, and before the first stanza was completed, gave way to sobs. It was the first time she had attempted it since Mr. Wetherell's death, and the memory of his funeral, at which the beautiful hymn was sung, overcame her completely, for a moment.

The Salt Lake papers bestowed unstinted praise on the company, and while their leader lay on a bed of pain, patronized each performance of the company as if in token of sympathy. And, when the end came, the press added its tribute to the eloquent eulogies everywhere pronounced upon the dead singer. From the *Salt Lake Daily Tribune* of January 6, the following paragraph is clipped.

"Emma Abbott died at Hotel Templeton yesterday morning at 7:35. * * * The morning sun broke through his curtain of mists for a brief period as if to lighten her pathway from earth to heaven, and his rays lit up the room in which she lay. The dying woman gazed lovingly at those who watched at her bedside, and with a smile faintly whispered, 'I am not afraid.' Then the icy hand of death swept over the lute strings of life, and the voice of the singer was hushed, while another soul winged its way out into the great Eternity. Away in boundless space to the somewhere, where amid golden castle walls purple banners float, and white-robed angels guard the parapets, her loved one waited for her, where the crown is hers, and where in the beautiful land of delight, she has found the husband gone before.

"Emma Abbott was dear to every American heart. The music of her voice was to us all like the sound of silver bells; there was blessing in her smile, and joy in her silvery laugh. It may be that it was best, but there is not one in this broad land to-day who ever knew her or heard her sing, that does not regret her sad death. She never forgot ner native home although petted and féted by the *creme de la creme* of other lands, and among her dearest friends were those she had known in her darkest days."

Since the assassination of Presidents Lincoln and Garfield no death has occurred in the United States which has been the subject of newspaper comment so general and grief so fervent, as that of Emma Abbott. The first telegram of Wednesday morning, Jan. 1, which announced her as "dangerously ill," caused anxiety to every heart which heard or read the news,

and from that until the end the news from Salt Lake City was eagerly awaited.

When the press telegram announced her a "little better," every waiting heart said "Thank God," and when on the other hand, word came that there was little hope, all hearts were stricken, and still all hoped that a kind Providence might avert the blow.

On Saturday the invalid received telegrams from various localities, expressing sympathy and saying to her, "Brave heart, have courage." These came from the press, from societies, clubs, theater managers and personal friends. The *New York World* wired the following: "Courage, brave heart; our sympathies are with you." The *Louisville Journal* sent a telegram, saying, "You have in your illness the love and sympathy of the general public. We all pray for your recovery." On Sunday, January 5, prayers were offered in many of the Catholic churches of the country, and also in orthodox churches many a minister offered a prayer in behalf of the woman who had by her purity of thought and action, her generosity, and her consistent life commanded their esteem.

On Monday manager Pratt and the Abbott family were the recipients of messages of condolence and regret, and these were followed by others expressing esteem and love for the dead.

On Tuesday evening the company with their precious charge started eastward, and at stations along the route were met by expressions of regard and reverence for the dead, and demonstrations of sorrow. The newspapers of Tuesday and every day thereafter for a fortnight, contained the most eloquent, touching tributes to the memory of the dead singer. Almost every journal in the country contained an editorial on the sad event, and the tone of all these, together with the public expression, betokened the fact that the country was in mourning for one well-beloved.

The sad cortege arrived in Chicago on Friday morning, Jan. 10, and to the *Chicago Tribune* of that date the author is indebted for the following account of the arrival of the company,

the funeral services, and the eloquent addresses of Prof. Swing and Dr. Thomas.

"At 9 : 15 o'clock the first section of the train rolled into the station. All the members of the Emma Abbott Opera Company, sixty in number, came on with the remains. Undertaker Jordan was there, and soon the big pine box containing the casket was lifted out of the baggage car and reverently borne by stalwart porters to the waiting hearse. Every hat was lifted as the little procession passed, and a strange hush fell for a moment or two on the noisy station.

"On the box were a number of pathetically faded and withered floral tributes from friends in Salt Lake City. There was a triumphal arch with the inscription 'Emma Abbott' in purple letters, surmounted by a cross, and hanging pendant from the crown of the arch a great white crown. Arch, cross, and crown were of smilax, lilies, and white hyacinths. This was from the Salt Lake Choral Society.

"A lyre of white hyacinths was from the Salt Lake Theater. Without cards attached were an anchor of white flowers, a cross of golden roses and a heart of crimson roses. Faded and withered, but with a faint, sweet fragrance exhaling from the dead petals, they were fitting emblems of the quiet, resting woman within the casket.

"From the depot the hearse proceeded at once to Undertaker Jordan's place, at Nos. 14 and 16, Madison street. The casket displayed when the pine box was opened was a fully decorated metal casket, finished to represent burled walnut, and almost overloaded with silvered ornaments. On the panels of the cover were a silver wreath, and a torch in raised metal. The plain silver tablet bore the name and age of the prima donna.

"On opening the casket it was evident that tender, loving hands had been busily careful to make easy the last long journey of its occupant. Peaceful and quiet she lay amid the quilted satin linings, and the scattered roses and smilax lay undisturbed on the gold-specked illusion about the sleeping face. The white right hand yet held a spray of lilies of the

valley, nor had the bunch of white roses and maidenhair fern fallen from the rigid left hand. She was arrayed in a superb gown of white watered silk with silk embroidered lilacs, white and purple, both in stitch and *applique*; the broad side panels of pale lilac velvet were caught to the exquisitely embroidered front with broideries of beads and pearls. The long, sweeping train of dull green velvet and white silk was richly covered with masses of lilac blossoms in *applique*. This was the robe she wore as Elvira in "Ernani," the last opera in which she ever sang.

"There was but little for the undertaker to do, and again the cover was screwed down. At 10 : 20 o'clock the casket was again placed in the hearse and taken to the Continental Hotel.

"At the head of the main staircase a portrait of the dead prima donna, heavily draped in black, was hung. At 10 : 30 o'clock the casket was taken upstairs to room 68, where Mrs. Abbott, venerable with her 76 years of life, in deepest sorrow waited to receive the dead body of her child. The door closed and Emma Abbott was for the last time alone with her mother, her sister, and brothers. In that room were her aged father and mother, her uncle, F. B. Abbott; her brothers, Frederick M. Abbott and Leon Abbott; her sister, Mrs. Lizzie Abbott Clark; her brother-in-law, Henry C. Clark, and her cousin, Charles Palmer.

"It was at first intended that no other person should be admitted to the room, but when it was learned that there would not be any opportunity to look on the face of the stilled songstress at Central Music Hall, many close and intimate friends begged that they should not be deprived of that last consolation. After an hour of privacy a large number of friends, chiefly of the theatrical profession, were admitted.

"Among these were: Mr. and Mrs. Elward, Mr. and Mrs. Bunker, Mr. and Mrs. Kendal, Mr. and Mrs. Regan, Mr. and Mrs. Frederick W. Friese, Mr. and Mrs. Skinner, Mrs. Rounds, Mrs. Oliver, Mrs. Kehl, Mrs. Hiltabridell, Mrs. Frank Lombard, Mrs. Eunice Masterman, Mrs. A. K. Day, of Lincoln,

Neb.; Miss Lulu Hiltabridell, Miss Lutie Lombard, Miss Agnes Ellerington, Miss Livingstone, Miss Ada Friese, Miss Carlotta Banks, Mr. Con. H. Tafe, Mr. M. McKenzie, Mr. Bloom, Mr. Sutherland, Mr. McCullough, Mr. Leo Morley, Mr. H. Fernandez, Mr. Withie, Mr. FitzPatrick, Mr. H. Kahn, Mr. L. H. Bisbee, Mr. Dan Consadine, Mr. William Pruette, Mr. L. Livingstone, Mr. D. B. Hodges.

"At 1 o'clock the room was again closed to all but the family, and soon after the preparations for the funeral procession to Central Music Hall were begun.

"Meantime, long before noon, Central Music Hall began to be besieged by thousands anxious to witness the imposing ceremonies, and before 1 o'clock every available seat in the house was filled. The doors were locked and not again opened until the close of the ceremonies, but still the crowd swelled and grew, filling halls and corriders, jamming the stairways and extending out over the sidewalk. It was a crowd of women chiefly, and with grim determination they held their ground, hoping against hope for admission.

"The arrangements within were admirable. All the seats in the parquet were reserved for the funeral party, and by the forethought of Manager Harmon all the boxes were held for the reporters.

"The stage was a vast mass of flowers. Black hangings draped the organ loft, with festoons of smilax and with white and pink lilies and roses scattered between the loops. Enormous curtains of black hung over the gilded organ pipes on either side, festooned with soft green ropes of smilax. The rear of the platform was also draped with funereal black, upon which hung two immense wreaths of pink and white flowers, under which in great letters of white flowers appeared a fac-simile of the autograph of Emma Abbott. In the center of the stage rose a lyre full six feet high of lilies, hyacinths, and pink roses, the broken strings being in purple. The great base was disposed pillow-wise and was made of pure white flowers. Upon this surface in deep purple was designed a musical staff with the



Emma Abbott as Josephine, the French Empress.

notes E, A, followed by a full rest and with the word "Finale" written above. On black draped tablets, in jars, were bunches of loose roses. On either side of the stage were great mounds of growing palms and longiflora lilies in blossom. High above each mound towered a beautiful laurel tree. Many beautiful floral designs were scattered about, one of the most beautiful a broken-stringed lyre of white lilies, the base being formed of wheat sheaves and a great cluster of Mermet roses glowing like pink coral, the favorite flowers of her in whose memory they were sent.

"The deep silence within was unbroken, though the galleries were packed to the roof, save for the impatient knocking at times on the fast-locked doors by those outside anxious to get in. It was a tense silence full of pain, broken at last, after an hour of waiting, by the wailing notes of Chopin's 'Marche Funebre' muffled into saddest melancholy by the black funereal hangings. As the solemn notes welled out from the organ under Harrison Wild's fingers, the procession of the dead appeared. First, Professor David Swing and Dr. H. W. Thomas, then the six honorary pall-bearers—J. H. McVicker of McVicker's Theater; Milward Adams, of the Auditorium; Thos. W. Prior, of the Chicago Opera House; Harry L. Hamlin, of the Grand Opera House; Harry J. Powers, of Hooley's, and William J. Davis, of the Columbia. Then the casket, upborne by James Lorange, Richard Karl, George Kenney, J. R. Murchie, Daniel Consadine, and William Pruette, all members of the Emma Abbott Opera Company.

"Following the casket came white-haired Seth Abbott and his wife, hiding her tears under her heavy veil, the father and mother; Mr. and Mrs. H. C. Clark, Leon and Frederick M. Abbott, F. B. Abbott, then the more intimate friends; then the members of the company, many still in the travel-stained garments of that long, dreary ride; and finally twenty-five Elks from the Chicago lodge wearing white gloves and crape bands on the left arm. As the casket was laid before the platform the keen, high notes of the march wailed out piercingly only to

sink again into the muffled, sobbing rhythm of the deep, solemn basso.

"A hush as of the grave itself followed, broken by the song of the chosen quartet—tenor, Whitney Mockridge; soprano, Mrs. Genevra Johnston Bishop; contralto, Mrs. Marie Hester; basso, George Ellsworth Holmes. They sang Dudley Buck's arrangement of Cardinal Newman's royal hymn, 'Lead, Kindly Light.'

"The family and the troupe occupied the seats to the left, and the pall-bearers and lodge of Elks those to the right. Between them in the aisle rested the casket. It bore a wreath of roses and lilies from the troupe, at the head the pillow of rest from the Elks, and over the hushed heart two palm branches with a knot of white roses fastened with sweeping white ribbon. As the song ceased with a whispered amen, Professor Swing began to read:

"'Lord let me know the number of my days.

Surely every man walketh in a vain shadow.

Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth or the world, from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God.

For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past and as a watch in the night.

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.

And behold I show you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death be swallowed up in victory.'

"Dr. Thomas then rose and uttered the following prayer:

"'Almighty Father, so teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom, and while we spend these years that are as a tale that is told, so teach us that we may understand the meaning of life and bring to pass great things. Teach us how we may live in the world of mind, in the world of spirit, of love, justice and mercy, in that world where we

can enter when the storm comes and all earthly enterings are useless. We pray Thy blessing upon those who are near to us in our sorrow. May great peace come upon these aged ones so afflicted. May the mantle of this dear one rest upon those who are left. And may these sorrowing ones realize that we are now in the world of immortality, there is no death, we are now touching eternities beyond. Bless those who have been associated with her. Give blessings to the many who have known and loved her. Bless the profession she so honored. Even the amusements of this world become sacred, that holiness may be written on every page of the universe, that at last the world may say, 'Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as in heaven.' And may we all learn, may life be more serious and earnest, the future hold more of life and hope. May we go out from here more considerate to each other. One whisper of loving words in life is worth more than all the garlands loving hands can place above the dead. May we learn to love even as Christ loved that in the end we may come into the kingdom. Amen.'

"Outside could be heard the talking of the great crowd that only accentuated the dead stillness within, and then, pure as a lark's note, rang out a single soprano. With a sob in every note that shook all hearts, Mrs. Bishop, looking down on the coffin of her loved dead friend, sang, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' from Handel's 'Messiah.' Sweetly, triumphantly, yet with infinite sadness, rang out the words, and then the song hushed to a whisper. Professor Swing then came to the platform edge. He said:

"'English statesmen have mentioned with pride that the morning drum-beat of the English soldiers was heard around the world. Such a reveille does indeed indicate the spread of a great language and a great power, but it must be thought only a forerunner of that better day when the world shall be girdled with song.

"'Song stands for so much that is best in human nature that the soul of man is said at last to enter heaven with song.

Happy are those toilers or travelers deemed who sing as they work or journey. Jean Paul Richter said a good song seemed to his heart to be the 'Evening hymn of this life and the morning hymn of the life to come.'

"'Thus all music binds the two worlds together. It bridges the gulf between time and eternity, and makes the abyss less terrible to those who must cross over. Not only Mozart but millions of mortals have passed upward amid joyful song.

"'All music is one art, just as all streams and oceans are one water, and as all above us is one sky. The artists who created the opera made also a better hymn for the sanctuary; and the holy religion of the centuries has been present to deepen the meaning of the tones which were to be poured forth from amid the scenery of the stage. The opera and the church have helped each other to sweeter tones. It requires all of human sentiment to create a great art. Laughter and tears must combine; the dancing child, the anxious patriot, the dying mortal must meet in the temple of the painter, the sculptor, the musician. That song, 'The Last Rose of Summer,' belongs in part to religion because the leaves of those scattered blossoms fall on the grave of man.

"'To the musical compositions of Mendelssohn called 'Songs without words,' the heart may add what words are most precious in the passing hour, for all classic music is like the flowers of the field—a decoration of a cabin or a palace—a wreath for the grave or the cradle.

"'Emma Abbott was born into this high art. Her father was a teacher of music. Her home was full of song. It is a great destiny for a woman to be born unto a mission of music. She holds a sway which is as wide as it is benevolent. Not all persons desire to hear the orator when he speaks; not all can follow his theme or his argument; to many the painter's canvas is dull and the sculptor's statue fine, but dead; but when music speaks the human heart listens; be it young or old, rich or poor, sad or happy.

"'Not only has this art the widest sweep, but it surpasses in

power the sister arts. Music can draw tears which painter and sculptor and architect are powerless to start. Music is most full of inspirations, longings, visions, spirituality, ambition, and hope. It is democratic and generous, for it offers its riches to all, and to all in almost equal shares. The king and the humblest subject are equal heirs. It was a goodness of God that permitted this child to carry this art in her bosom to and fro in the world while many a season came and went.

"'Music will not make virtue and morals, but it will aid them to come and expand. No learning, no culture, no art will absolutely make noble all who touch either or all. Nature has no absolute certainties about the soul; but this we know, that many millions of persons are made better by the knowledge, the culture, the art of our race. Music is one of those mountains on which a pure light falls. It helps the good mind by becoming to it a language better than that of words. After words have all failed this new eloquence springs up and carries man onward. As prose asks poetry to help it reach a higher power, so poetry asks music to become its Elijah chariot.

"'It is with tears of regret and admiration that we consign this singer to the dust. She brought melodies to the whole people, and thus made melody spring up in the homes of the land. A pure opera presided over by a genius in the art and by a being high and beautiful in her life, does not end when the curtain falls, but the sounds go home with the scattering throng, and the sentiments awakened in one evening spread over many a subsequent year. The patriotic hymns of our country and the hymns of religion redouble their beauty when a great voice has passed by, for all art is one, and as the eloquent Massillon and Pitt and Webster make all speech reach more eloquence, so the gifted children of song make the eight notes rise to a new power in all our hearts. One rich hour will inspire a lifetime.

"'Emma Abbott died too soon; but she abates grief by having lived beautifully. Her destiny was not that of music only, but it was that of a wide and rich womanhood. She was a sister to

the womanhood joined to her in her operatic company. The task-master was also the friend. Her company journeyed in a helpful friendship. Her life was sincere, unassuming, beautifully human, and as religious as are most of the Christian lives. From her childhood to her last day in our world her life was all of one color. It underwent no rude or sad changes. Emma Abbott, the child; Emma Abbott, the girl, flushed with her first success, and Emma Abbott, dying in the far West, were one and the same tint of mind and heart. Her music, her friendships, her justice, her religion, all meet now to make for her friends a deeper sorrow, but a richer memory.

"'It must have been while looking down upon such a face in its stillness, Father Ryan thought out his pathetic verses:

'Out of the silence wake me a song,
Beautiful, sad, soft, and low,
Let the loveliest music sound along
And wing each note with a tale of woe
Dim and drear
As hope's last tear.
Out of the silence wake me a hymn
Whose sounds are like shadows soft and dim.

'Out of the darkness flash me a song
Brightly dark and darkly bright,
Let it sweep as a lone star sweeps along
The mystical shadows of the night.
Sing it sweet
Where nothing is drear or dark or dim
And earth song soars into heavenly hymn.'

"'Fitting verses as it would seem for that woman who whispered with failing lips: 'My next song will be sung in heaven.'"

"There was a moment's pause as he ceased, and then Dr. Thomas stood in his place. Dr. Thomas said:

"'No one liveth to himself. Being and the relations of being are inseparable. Of all the millions on earth each life is related to some other life. And hence no one dieth to himself. The death of each one, young or old, rich or poor—toiler, seaman, soldier, artist, orator, scholar, poet, scientist—is felt by some other heart.

"'When one whose life has reached out and become a part of many lives goes away from our shores the sense of loss and sorrow is correspondingly larger. The sudden departure of this richly gifted and beautiful spirit has clouded the sky of the new year, and caused tears to fall in many homes and in lands far away. The death of Emma Abbott is a loss to the world of song, and many, many are sadly saying: 'We shall hear her sweet voice on earth no more.'

"'In the midst of this large and sympathetic audience, gathered here to honor her memory, there are hearts that think not now of the name and fame of the departed one. Gathered near this coffin are those who called her child and sister: the aged father and mother, and those left of the earthly home where her childhood years were spent playing in the yard and garden and singing her little songs. They remember the struggles of those early years when she walked with her father from place to place and sung in the neighboring school-houses and villages; and dearer to these hearts than all the honors won in after years from kings and courts is the memory of her pure, loving heart and life. To these sorrowing ones she was never, even in the midst of her splendid success, any the less child and sister. And it was the greatest joy of this devoted child to be able to help care for those who had cared for her. She never forgot or grew away from her childhood associations; and plans were found to build here in our city, where she was born, a beautiful home where the aged ones might rest, and all be together again.

"'Gathered near this coffin are the members of her company; with them she journeyed and sung; and to these faithful companions this death must be a tender loss and sorrow. Beyond these are the thousands of artists and the mourning people in the cities of our own and other lands who mourn with us to-day; for Emma Abbott, like a Stanley in journalism and a Beecher and a Chapin in the pulpit, honored the profession to which she belonged; and she sang to the great heart of the world, and more, perhaps, than any other since the days of Christine

Nilsson and Jenny Lind; and along with Anna Louise Cary and Abbie Carrington, who still sing, was she dear to the non-professional and yet music-loving public.

"'Against her social reputation there was never a breath of suspicion, and the unquestioned purity of her life did not a little to lessen the prejudices and to rebuke the harsh, unjust criticisms of the clergy and the church. She compelled the respect of all; she was admired and loved by those who knew her personal worth. She helped elevate the character, and inspired with a noble zeal and purpose the drama of her time. Thousands of young and aspiring artists have felt the inspiration of this noble life, and will themselves be greater and better because she added to greatness the crown of goodness.

"'Upon few, if any, of the social questions of our day has the change of the better class of public opinion been greater of late years than in the kindlier and more appreciative attitude of the church toward the stage. This is owing, in part, to the gradual wearing away of the sharp lines once drawn between the church and the world. The larger intelligence of the present is beginning to see that the qualitity of goodness is the same wherever found, and that the drama has its place and value; that between the hours of work and worship there are hours when the mind and heart may find rest and improvement in the diversions and lessons of the opera and the play. And then the character of the singers and players has shared in the common growth of morals in all the departments of life, so that the more thoughtful minds now no longer ask, How shall we get rid of the drama? but how shall its evils be lessened and its greatest power for good be realized?

"'Not pausing long, perhaps, if at all, to theorize, Emma Abbott quietly entered this field of labor, and, it may be, without any aim at first of making it better, but simply with the noble resolve to be herself good. And in that way she came to know and to value the good in others, and by the simple power of her own life and personality she has helped make the position of the conscientious artist one of the most honorable, and



Emma Abbott as Lucia d' Lammermoor.

of that honor she was herself justly proud and tenderly sensitive. She did not play on the Sabbath, but used that day for rest and worship. In a Southern city, where she attended service one Sabbath morning, and heard the minister denounce the stage in almost unmeasured terms, she asked the privilege of replying after the audience was dismissed, and she was heard in its vindication. She was herself a Christian, and lived a life of faith and prayer.

"'The death of this noble woman leaves our world poorer in that which it needs be richer. The power of music to charm and bless has not yet been realized; the mission of song has only begun; the time will come when the true dramatic artists will take their places as among the recognized backers and helpers in all that is good. The great chorus of humanity is yet to be heard in the glad day when all the people shall sing.

"'It is deeply to be regretted that this child of song, this pure spirit of earth, has gone away so soon. Had she obeyed the word of her physician it might have been different; but only those who serve the public know how hard it is to disappoint that public; and how many sing and speak when they should rest and sleep. It was her energy that made her what she was, that nerved her to that last effort. Such voice culture and power come only at the end of hard years of study. Emma Abbott was yet in the rich summer-time of life, and there should have been many years before the autumn and the winter.

"'It is strange and pathetic to think how all the treasures of learning, of scholarship, of poetry and art are held in these frail earthen vessels; in brains and hearts that tire, that wear out or break down by the way. Oh, it must be that this is the beginning, and not the end; that the spirits of earth go away to live and love, to think and sing in some other land that is better. This was the blessed faith and hope that lived in this heart that beats no more. 'I shall sing my next song in heaven.' 'I am not afraid to die.' And I think that her hold on life was weakened by the great sorrow through which she

had passed, and that it was easier to go away because her husband had gone before, and the gates were left open, and sweet voices were calling her to come.'

"Once more the quartette sang, this time Dudley Buck's 'Art Thou Weary?' and then Dr. Thomas stepped forward to give the benediction, as follows:

"'I must first in the name of the family thank those present here for their presence, and the public for their tender sympathy in this their sorrow.

"'I heard a voice from heaven saying, write, for these words are true and faithful, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.

"'Forasmuch as this spirit has returned to the God that sent it, the body will be committed to the grave, earth to earth, dust to dust, ashes to ashes, awaiting the final resurrection, and may the blessing of God rest among you, the peace that passeth understanding abide among you, and the love of Jesus Christ keep you always. Amen.'

"Then from the organ the solemn Guilmant's 'Marche Funebre,' with the Seraphic Chant by Harrison Wild.

"The casket was again lifted and as the sad procession was formed every one in that great congregation rose as by one impulse and so remained until the whole funeral party had gone."

CHAPTER XVII.



O the newspaper fraternity Emma Abbott was always courteous; and, whether a reporter, special writer or editor, he was received with the utmost cordiality. In this respect she differed greatly from her husband, for at times Mr. Wetherell was *brusque* and patronizing in his treatment of reporters; so much so as to incur their displeasure, and they, realizing that their opportunity for revenge lay in scathing criticism of the next performance, were sure to avail themselves thereof, and Miss Abbott was made to suffer unkind thrusts which she did not in the least deserve.

Seeking the solution of this problem, she was not long in discovering it, and thereafter took the more pains to receive all in a cordial manner. She never possessed the idea of some artists, that to impress the public with a sense of their dignity, they must "snub," or refuse to see visitors, but often sacrificed personal comfort, and the daily rest of which she stood in so great need, to entertain callers. Then, too, she liked journalists, whether men or women, and often said, "To the newspapers I am greatly indebted. As a rule they are kind to me,

and have been from the start, Eli Perkins and Tom Ochiltree being the noted exceptions.

"I love the fraternity, and have many times been publicly honored by its members." It was one of her favorite ideas to invite a group of journalists to an early supper, then furnish them with tickets for the evening.

It is not to be thought that Miss Abbott differed from other mortals in having an eye on the treasury, but with her desire to further her own interests, and add to her income, there was always coupled a desire to help others; to bring pleasure to her fellow mortals, and there are scores of reporters, dramatic critics, etc., in the United States, who remember a pleasant little gathering of the clan with Mrs. Wetherell, as hostess.

It is, therefore, not surprising that when she died the hundreds who were accustomed to interview the prima donna, and who looked for her annual coming as for that of a friend, should experience a sense of personal loss. On Tuesday, January 7th, the day following that of her death, all the leading journals contained articles, many of them editorials, expressing sorrow at her death, and admiration of her beautiful life. These articles, or at least most of them voiced the heartfelt sentiments of personal friends.

The dailies of her native city, Chicago, did her especial honor, and excerpts from their editorials and special articles, as well as from newspapers in various localities, will follow. These are given because they are exponents of the hearts of the people of the entire country, and confirm the opinion of the author that either outside or in the dramatic or other profession there are few women possessed of hearts as unselfish and pure, principles as staunch, and lives as nearly moulded to the golden rule as was that of Emma Abbott Wetherell.

William Penn Nixon was one of her warmest friends, and in his paper, the *Inter-Ocean*, she found an able advocate. In an editorial of January, Mr. Nixon writes:

"A great favorite of the people, one of the most highly esteemed and generally admired women of the stage, Emma Ab-

bott, died in Salt Lake City yesterday morning of pneumonia. But eighteen months ago her husband, Eugene Wetherell, died in Denver of the same dread disease, and if death can assume any grateful shape to sunny womanhood in the prime of years, it may have been some consolation to the yet sorrowing widow that she passed from life as did the beloved husband. The tender affection and sweet devotion with which these two persons brought happiness into their mutual life were matters of not infrequent approving comment among their professional friends, and gave to the stage one of its beautiful examples of marital love and constancy. In this light, if for no other reason, Emma Abbott deserves the regretful tears and long remembrance of her countrywomen. She was a moral benefactor of the stage, and as such, rather than as the singer whom the common people loved to hear, will she be honored wherever there are loyal service and earnest prayers for the establishment of the theater upon a noble plane of art and ethics.

"To have passed from youth to mature womanhood in the glare of the footlights, through the feverish atmosphere of an art at once the highest and the most dangerous to its votaries, without having once incurred the suspicion of vice or felt the reproach of virtue, is to have achieved more than fame in the great tourney of life. Holy the tears an aged mother will let fall upon the still face of such a daughter.

"Emma Abbott had physical courage as well as moral bravery. She was a woman of singularly indomitable personal force, possessing in an eminent degree that quality termed pluck, and it is not unlikely the sad event of her death is in some measure attributable to this mental and spiritual energy which forced her rather to suffer than disappoint the expectations of her friendly public. When she should have been confined to her room under the close care of physicians, she insisted upon being carried to the theater and there in the stirring role of Ernani sung her death song. Truly a heart-sorrowing spectacle to look back upon; but the skeptical public is ever uncharitable when the theater is closed because an actor is sick.

Somehow we come to regard these entertainers as bond servants to our will, creatures not susceptible as ourselves to the thousand natural shocks that flesh is heir to, and we will not allow to them the indulgence we permit ourselves when heart and brain and blood refuse their accustomed healthful functions. We bid them act even when the wings of the hovering angel cast shadows upon them, and command them laugh when heart-ache sends rivers of salt through their quivering veins. The public must not be disappointed—strange monster public, that penitently mourns to-day what yesterday it was ready to deride.

"Some who are disposed to determine all values from a purely critical standard marveled at the undiminished popularity of Emma Abbott, who sang to vast audiences when more eminent *artistes* had greatly disproportionate success. Perhaps there are two explanations of this not very surprising fact. Emma Abbott was always to be depended upon to do her best, whatever the conditions around her. She sang with her heart in her work; she was honest to herself as well as to her manager, her company, and her public. The announcement that she would sing meant that she would sing, and in her entire career she never turned away an audience. With her the profession of the singer was not a means to an end, it was the end itself, and no one was ever more in earnest than she, more zealous to do well, more indefatigable in the attempt to do well. A second cause of her success was the thorough, intense spirit of Americanism that animated and sustained her. She was loyally democratic, and responded to the people as they responded to her. She could never do too much for her audiences. Their wishes were her desires, and she threw as much ardor into an encore as into the original aria, never demurring, never evincing the slightest disinclination to comply with demands sometimes more selfish than complimentary. These two varieties of self-devotion made Emma Abbott an unique and deeply interesting personality amid the prevalent artificiality and insincerity of the stage, and they won the love of the people, a love that survived all the coming and going of new

attractions and temporary favorites, and will stir in thousands of hearts to-day a sorrow as melting and as tender as though a personal and near friend had passed beyond the curtain of our dreams. There is an inspiration in the biography of this woman that will not be lost, but will urge to success other brave hearts in which duty will keep pace with ambition."

The *Chicago Tribune* of same date, says: "No other woman of her profession has at death been mourned by so many hearts as is Emma Abbott to-day. Her younger days were those of struggle, to obtain the cultivation necessary to place her before the public, her later years have been full of unremitting toil and research, and her labors have been crowned by the love of the American people.

"She was married to Eugene Wetherell, a New York druggist, in 1874. When she returned to America he managed her first concerts in 1878, and a year later became associated with Charles H. Pratt in the Emma Abbott English Opera Company, an organization which from that time up to the present, has enjoyed a singular operatic career of unalloyed prosperity. Miss Abbott was now its firmest figure, and no singer could claim so strong a personal following of real friends. Both she and her husband were good managers and tremendous workers, and by judicious investments had accumulated a fortune that was estimated at $1,000,000; but withal were most charitable and liberal. Miss Abbott always selected her own assistants, tried their voices, and assigned to them their parts. Her company was run on business principles. Liberal salaries were given and prompt payment was the rule. Hence she was always able to secure the best talent in her line. One of her purposes was strong *ensemble* work, and her operas were always finely costumed and well staged. Miss Abbott herself was the finest dresser on the stage.

"As a worker she was absolutely tireless; and every detail of a production was given her personal inspection and sanction. It has oftimes been a mystery to those associated with this energetic woman. how she stood the nervous strain consequent

upon the tasks with which she insisted upon loading herself. It is a singular coincidence that her husband, Eugene Wetherell, should have been carried away by the same disease that robbed the prima donna of her life. He was suddenly attacked with pneumonia two years ago to-day, and died in Denver. He had done much—in fact, everything—to push his wife to the top notch of her ambition. His world was Emma Abbott, the artist, and he never wearied of advancing her personal as well as her professional welfare. He invested the money that she earned with great shrewdness, and his investments prospered so well that she was recognized even at the time of her husband's death as the richest woman on the stage in this country. To her husband she was devoutly attached, and she had never fully recovered from his loss.

"A Chicago friend said of her yesterday: 'She had a kind and lovable character. One of the greatest of her virtues was her modesty. She was ready to offer succor where it was needed, but was strongly averse to letting the public know her charities. And because her charities were so quietly and unassumingly bestowed, she acquired the name of being so selfish. But I happen to know that such criticisms were unjust, and that she did acts of generous benevolence of which no one ever heard, except a few of her trusted friends.' The last article that appeared about Miss Abbott in these columns, was the refutation of a cruel slander of an afternoon paper accusing her of filial ingratitude.

"Everyone will concede that the dead prima donna did much for musical art and education in the United States. She dedicated more temples of song than any other woman; her companies were always formed with care, and they were generally well balanced and strong in good material. She strove to get good *ensembles* rather than perfection in any one individual. Hence her performances were always symmetrical, and worthy to be ranked above the average. She gave the masses of the people all over the great West an insight into operatic works that but for her would have remained a sealed book to them.



Abbott in Ruy Blas.

She taught them to love music and to give their material aid to art. She sang for the masses of the people in her way.

"She served them well, and awakened a new art impulse. She had high aims, and whatever she did, she did with her might; a typical woman of the West. Her sterling qualities of head and heart have triumphed over many adversities; endeared her to many. Emma Abbott will have many mourners in every town of consequence all over these United States."

Col. J. N. Taylor, of Chicago, knew Miss Abbott from her babyhood to the year of her death, and who was a former business partner of her father, Seth Abbott, indignant at the stories told of Emma's "shabby attire," her "one dress, made of a coffee sack," etc., volunteered the following out of a spirit of justice to the dead, and esteem for the living.

"The poet is born, not made—and this axiom may apply to genius and talent in other realms than that of poetry. The ideal pervades every department of nature and art. Thus nature, art, poetry are a harmonious trinity, distinctive but inseparable. Whenever a great soul is manifested a great genius is disclosed, or a great artist entrances the world, the busy searchers after primary conditions turn their telescopic imaginations at once to the place of his birth and seek to show that greatness was born amidst clouds and darkness, developed in conflicts with tribulation and strengthened by adversity. This has been true in all times from Homer to Christ, from Christ to Ben Franklin, and from Franklin to this anno domini. I do not desire to satirize this exploring curiosity of the seekers after miracles; for their investigations often do disclose some very interesting situations and yield rich material for the pen and easel.

"But I do desire that the busy explorers into the misty regions of primary condition shall avoid such methods as will lead the great public to consider them as very industrious Eli Perkinses and Tom Ochiltrees. Look at the stories recently published about the eminent and popularly loved—now deeply mourned—songstress, Emma Abbott. I was acquainted with her from her eighth year until her death. I have met her fre-

quently since she became the queen of the English opera stage. I knew her circumstances personally and well. I was intimately acquainted with her father and members of her family, and her father was, between the years 1858 and 1866, associated with me in business, he being a successful, persevering insurance agent every day that he could spare from his engagements in music. Among the false and fairy tales told of Emma Abbott are those about her going barefoot and in shabby clothing. I saw her very often as a little girl among other school children, but I never saw her without good shoes, and she was always as properly dressed as the other girls attending the public schools. Her natural good taste led her to be more careful and neat in the arrangement of her dress than the average of her young schoolmates.

"The story of her walking to a neighboring town and giving 'an Abbott concert all by herself' is wholly untrue. It was given in the office where her father was employed, where she had called to accompany him home on Saturday afternoon, and her listeners were the United States assessors, collectors, their assistants and the occupants of other offices in the same building. * * *

"In duty and justice to the memory of the dear and lamented one, who has been so early called to join the chorus of the angels, and to the bereaved and stricken family, I crush the false images that have been set up to gratify a morbid craving for fictitious romance, and thus regulate these fabulous tales to the companionship of the little hatchet of the Washington family, and the big whale that had possession of Jonah. With the fact of her filial affection both in childhood and her maturer life, though it has been falsely aspersed, the public is now familiar, and her pure life will become the model to which we may point the young daughters of present and future times."

Minneapolis was one of the cities in which Mr. and Mrs. Wetherell felt an especial interest. This is partly attributable to the fact that they had real estate holdings here; but with Mrs. Wetherell, there were other attractions. Here the father

she loved so dearly had for a number of years made his home, and having platted one of the most beautiful tracts of land near the city had dedicated it to her, calling it *Emma Abbott Park.* This he intended to make a charming resort to which when weary from toil, the laborer might without other expense than that of transportation repair with his family, and spend a day, amid bird-song, bloom, and verdure. Financial reverses came and this tract passed into the hands of the prima donna herself, and had she lived another season, the work of beautifying the grounds and carrying out her father's plans would have been commenced.

In Minneapolis, too, she was always cordially received, and many a beautiful tribute of love and appreciation has been passed over the footlights. The press of the city stood by her, too, and with most of the members of the journalistic corps she was personally acquainted and called each by name. When she lay on a bed of suffering in Salt Lake City more than one message of sympathy and love was sent her from Minneapolis, and at her death the papers all gave their sorrow most fervent expression. The *Morning Tribune* of January 7 says:

"Throughout the Union the news of Emma Abbott's untimely demise will be received with sincere mourning. Few personages in public life have so endeared themselves to the people as has this gifted, painstaking songstress, who has been so suddenly summoned hence by death. In Minneapolis, the home of her aged father, she was an especial favorite, both socially and in her artistic capacity. Since her earliest girlhood the operatic stage has been her home, and her sweet voice has charmed the lovers of music in every city of importance in the country. She was American born, her grandest triumphs have been upon the American stage, and all America loved, honored and admired her. Her career from the concert stage to the very summit of operatic fame has been one of honest endeavor, self reliance, industry and ambition to excel. She was a sweet, womanly woman withal, adored by her sex as one of its noblest representatives; universally respected not only for her

fame and talent, but for the purity of her character. Beginning her career in poverty and obscurity, but with pluck, principle, ambition and an abiding faith in her genius, she had just reached the full fruition of her fondest hopes when she was cut down by death. Hers has been a remarkable career and one full of valuable lessons to young women who are thrown upon the world to battle for themselves."

Mr. C. H. Du Bois, of Minneapolis, wrote: "The death of Emma Abbott, announced in the noon edition of to-day's *Evening Tribune*, sent a pang of regret throughout this community, where the brave and honest little prima donna was so well known and so universally loved and admired. She has been taken away in the very prime of her artistic power, and at the summit of her artistic career.

"The life of Emma Abbott affords a lesson of encouragement to good girls everywhere, who happen to be thrown upon their own resources. It may be said that she made her own way in life without any other aid than what her own talents, energy and purity of character commanded. In her girlhood a concert singer, inevitably surrounded by all sorts of temptations, she always preserved her innocence and cheerfulness, and steadily pursued the upward path which ultimately led to fame and fortune. That a girl so thrown upon the world and destitute of means, should have finally become one of the most popular and attractive of opera singers; that she should have developed and strengthened her character into a noble womanhood, and acquired the manners and accomplishments of a lady of fashion, these facts are calculated to encourage the most lowly and unfortunate of her sex to the highest aims. It is true that Miss Abbott was possessed of unusual natural gifts; but these would have been lost or destroyed had it not been for the honesty of purpose, the purity of motive, and the industry which characterized every step of her career. Any girl with moderate gifts may make a place for herself in the great world —not perhaps so high, but still respectable and happy—if she will imitate the virtues of Emma Abbott.



Abbott as Arline, in Bohemian Girl.

"We do not know of a public character whose death will cause more genuine sorrow in so many homes as that of Emma Abbott. She was regarded by the public not only as a pleasing *artiste*, but as the lovely woman whose very presence exhaled sweetness and whose life exalted her sex. Greater singers, more powerful and accomplished *artistes*, we have, and shall have, but never a character more honorable and lovable."

A special article in another number of the *Tribune* says: "Emma Abbott's earliest successes were achieved as a concert singer in the West. She was one of Chicago's discoveries. Twenty-four years ago she was first heard in this city on the concert stage, it being twelve years later that she first appeared in opera, upon which occasion, January 6, 1879, she essayed the title-role in Mignon at Hooley's Theater. In the sixties she concertized largely in the West, and had considerable local reputation; but it was not until her engagement as soprano of Dr. Chapin's church in Brooklyn, and her conscientious work there secured patrons for her who sent her to Europe to be educated, that her fame broadened and her name became well known to the operatic world. She was engaged upon the operatic stage about twelve years, and during that time essayed all kinds of roles, heavy and light, in English, French, German and Italian opera, though the style of her action and the capacity of her voice fitted her best for the light roles.

"She was indomitable in effort, honest in doing everything to the best of her ability, industrious to an astonishing degree, fair with her audiences, and stainless in her character. These qualities commended her to the people, and it was to the people rather than to fashion or to strictly musical audiences that she appealed. She never appealed in vain. When all other companies were doing poorly it was certain that the Emma Abbott company was in clover. Much of this success was due also to excellent business management, for the little prima donna had a good head for business details. Her late husband, Mr. Wetherell, was also a good manager, and between them they made a success. She was a lady of sterling qualities, of

character, was devoted ardently and enthusiastically to her profession, and believed in herself whatever the critics might say. It is needless to say also that the people believed in her. She rose in her profession by undaunted pluck and unflagging industry. She had the genius of work."

The (Arkansas) *Little Rock Gazette*, says editorially:

"The death of Emma Abbott creates a loss to the operatic world it will be difficult to fill. The early life of the singer was passed in comparative obscurity. She believed that she could sing and that a glorious career awaited her; but she could only hope and wait, until a syndicate of New York friends furnished the means that sent her to Europe. The instruction there received fitted her for the stage.

"She returned to this country and the world knows her subsequent history. It is a most striking illustration of what ability, energy, pluck, and well-directed ambition can accomplish. For thirteen years hers has been the best-known and most successful of American opera companies. She contended against professional rivals who spoke her name only with sneers, and for years she received more blows than caresses from the critics, who declared she could not sing, while others on whom their praises were showered, rose, strutted their brief hour on the stage, and disappeared from view.

"Emma Abbott was the people's prima donna. She sang to and for the masses. She came up from the people, the poor, humble but honest of earth. Her broad, generous sympathies were with them, and she never forgot the dark days, when to her a plain, simple fare and a humble home were luxuries.

"She could well defy the critics, who abused her because it was the fashion, for she was the singer of the millions who never grew weary in applauding 'Honest Little Emma,' in whose conscientious efforts to please and succeed they recognized the progress of an American woman, who appealed to them as a sister and friend.

"Beyond all this, and it exerted a marked influence on her career, she was good and pure. The vile breath of slander

never touched her name. The doors of the most exclusive society were open to her, but her devotion to her art and to the husband she had wedded years before the world had heard her name, and who preceded her to the grave only two years ago, left little time for the pleasures of social life. She had determined to win fame and fortune, and both came to her because she deserved them."

CHAPTER XVIII.



F all the words of praise of Emma Abbott and regret for her loss, uttered by her intimate friends were given, they would alone make several chapters, but that being impracticable, a few tributes of love from those she claimed as her "coterie of dear friends, who always find something good to say of me and generally forgive my shortcomings," are given.

Mr. W. S. B. Matthews, a prominent journalist, writes: "Personally she was always cordial. Even when she had been hardly treated, and had had her little cry in private, she rarely or never allowed the slightest sign of the fact to appear when next she met the writer, who thoughtlessly, or even maliciously, had wounded her sensibility. Her attitude was studiously humble, and I suppose she always considered every criticism as the expression of the critic's conscientious conviction, and if it seemed to possess sense, carefully considered it and adopted whatever struck her as having force. Her manner was cordial, and her self-reliance unbounded. No amount of work or service was too much, if needful to carry a point. She never forgot a friend, and gave away vast sums of money. I



Abbott in "Queen Anne" Riding Habit.

never saw in her the slightest self-consciousness due to her phenomenal success.

"Were I to sum up all the defects that sixteen years' intimate acquaintance has brought to light, I would say that there was no one attributable to any more unamiable motive than an overweening devotion to hard work, in the line of what she regarded her career. She was a true woman whom to know slightly was to respect, to know well was to love. May she find the blessed immortality in hope of which her spirit took its flight."

Mrs. S. C. Hazlett, of Cincinnati, says in a letter to a friend: "We often talked together hand in hand, or arm in arm, sometimes with quivering lips, and tear-filled eyes. Still she was full of hope, and earnestness in her ambition to rise in her profession. She talked to me of her inner life, told me how anxious she was to be first in character, pure and upright, as to be the world's best singer. * * * I always remembered the woman, and loved the songs with her. Her voice was purer and sweeter when last I heard her than ever before. I considered her at her best in Norma. What a dear, winning woman she was."

One who was for years a devoted personal friend of Miss Abbott closes an article to the *Minneapolis Sunday Tribune* as follows:

"Now she is gone, and while to the aged father and mother whom she idolized, and for whom she so generously provided, life will be dreary indeed, to the hosts of loving friends and admirers the world over, it were a sadder sight to have seen her grow old and to watch the failing of her wonderful talent. She was taken in the zenith of her career, while capable of thrilling hearts and souls with her beautiful songs.

"The critics have said, 'Emma Abbott is not a great singer, as there are roles she cannot interpret, and heights to which she might not hope to attain.' But she was a singer of the people. If the critics condemned the interpretation of 'Nearer My God to Thee,' into La Sonambula, the 'Lullaby Song' into Mikado, and the 'Last Rose of Summer' into Crispino,

the people did not; and it was to the hearts and tastes of the people she appealed, for, said she, 'The people pay their admission fee and thus make my future; the critics dead-head their entrance, and try to rob me of what the people give.'

"And she was great, for she had a grand nature; full of charity for the erring, praise for the good; a generous heart that prompted her to give liberally to those less favored than herself. During an acquaintance and intimate friendship of years, I discerned many beauties of character, to which those who knew her only casually are strangers, and while among my keepsakes I treasure numerous souvenirs, tokens of her love and friendship, I prize most the memory of her pure heart, her words of love and sympathy in sorrow, and her loyal, womanly example. Her last words, 'I am not afraid to die,' bore witness to her guileless life, and her endeavor at all times to follow in the footsteps of the blessed Master."

Col. J. W. McKenzie, of Kentucky, a member of the *World's Fair Commission*, was one of a group of men who in a parlor at the Palmer house, Chicago, were discussing the Abbott will. There were some in the company who censured Miss Abbott because she left money to the churches, and none to the theatrical profession. After others had expressed their opinions Col. McKenzie expressed himself as follows:

"The last testament of this distinguished songstress has been published to the world. Out of a magnificent fortune, approaching nearly a million of dollars, she has provided munificently for the kindred of herself and her husband. She has bequeathed to eleven churches of different faiths $5,000 each, for the reason, as she says: 'I have attended them from time to time, and have particularly enjoyed the service.' She gives in equal amount, a large sum to a number of the most tender and beautiful charities, including the poor foundling, the helpless mother deprived of sunlight in the garret, the newsboy of the lodging house, the children of the slums, the aged and infirm, and every form of human misery to which a crust of bread is a benediction.

"She stretched out her hand lovingly wherever famine stalked and pestilence spread its wings. Her charity was as boundless as the air; it embraced every spot from which came a cry for help.

"Her mind was too broad to be fettered by the casuistry of creeds. She loved alike the Protestant and the Catholic, the Jew and the Gentile, the devotee and the agnostic. But she loved truth more than all, 'truth that like the *indotata virge* of the Romans, that modest, dowerless virgin, going forth to meet the bridegroom, most beautiful in that she was devoid of meretricious ornament, and lovliest in that she had nothing but herself to give.'

"Surpliced clergymen may inveigh against the stage, but Emma Abbott's toilsome, guileless, gentle life is a sufficient answer to all the charges that ever emanated from cassock or sacredotal stole.

"Some years ago in the city of Nashville, Tennessee, Emma Abbott, with her company was playing in that city of churches. On Sunday, during her stay, thirsting for the comforts which her spiritual nature demanded, she attended one of the churches, the name of whose clergyman, it is a pleasure to say, is not now remembered, who, knowing her presence, spoke in such terms of reproach of the calling of the great actress as to cause her with bowed head, to arise and leave the building. Where could she go? What refuge was there for a white soul like hers if a sanctuary erected to God did not afford it? It is to be sincerely hoped that the minister thus publicly insulting may, when he has paid the debt she has paid, leave behind him a will that may be read in comparison with hers, in order that a discriminating world may determine which contains most of the true spirit of the Savior of mankind.

"Her virtues would require volumes for enumeration. Her art was her shrine, at which she worshiped with Oriental devotion. She laid her ear on the breast of nature and caught all the harmonies of humanity. The fabled song of the dying swan found exemplification in her. Living she delighted mill-

ions with the magic of her tuneful voice; and her will, which is an echo after death, is sweeter far than all.

"Heinrich Heine, the most melodious of all the German poets, and the one who made nature his exclusive model, asked that there might be graven upon his tomb this sentence: 'He loved the flower of the Brenta.' The friends of Emma Abbott might ask that there might be engraved upon her tomb the sentiment: 'She loved humanity and the world was thrall to her song.'

"Skilled in the highest domain of her art, she sang the songs of the people, and with no more pretention than the thrush that pipes his evening roundelay to ravish the ear of the cottager.

"It may be said of her, as was said of Robert Burns, who wrote and sang the songs of Scotland:

'I see along the banks of Ayr
A ploughman, who, 'mid foul and fair,
Sings at his task;
So sweet I know not if it is
The tuneful laverock's song or his,
Nor care to ask.'

"Her life work is done; the great reaper, with his inexorable sickle, has gathered her into the eternal sheaf. The curtain has fallen for the last time and veiled her forever from mortal sight; but the recollection of her tender deeds and the charm of her flute-like voice will live forever in the phonograph of human memory."

In a letter to the *Philadelphia Record*, Mr. J. W. Hinds, of Wilkesbarre, writes:

"Dear Emma Abbott, for whose coming we had learned to watch and wait as for that of the birds, and the leaves, and the flowers, has passed from earth. What a grand character was hers! Her generosity was unbounded. To those who had in any way encouraged her in her early years, whether by a kindly word or patronage, she always expressed herself as under obligation, and she never seemed to consider such obliga-

tion fully discharged. When in after years she met these friends, she would say: 'I don't forget all you did for me, and now I want you to accept this (whatever the bestowal might be), not as a remuneration for your kindness, for money cannot discharge that debt; but in token of my remembrance of your goodness.' I never knew a woman in public life so easily touched by suffering as was she. As a rule, after people knock about the world for a time, and jostle against deceit, falsehood, etc., they become hardened, but Emma Abbott would cry like a child at a story of woe.

"One day, on the street in Alleghany City, I saw her stop and inquire of a poor, crippled old man the cause of his lameness, and when she had given him almost the entire contents of her purse, she turned to me saying, 'John, I wish I knew that he has a comfortable place to sleep and enough to eat. I never see an old man in such circumstances, but I think of my dear old father, and how it would grieve me were his condition similar.'

"And yet she gave wisely, never heeding the importunities of professional beggars. She was greatly annoyed by begging letters, often receiving a number in one mail. Blackmailers obtained no satisfaction from her, her keen intuition divining at once their intentions."

Mary H. Fiske, the Giddy Gusher of the *New York Mirror*, whose bright and witty sayings cheered hundreds, and whose death cast gloom over the readers of that paper, attended a performance of the Abbott company, in Washington, some years ago, and afterward wrote to a friend as follows: "I went to hear Emma Abbott on Monday evening, and when I left the theater I said to myself, 'I don't like her because—because—I don't.' Next morning I went to fulfill a promise to interview the prima donna, and when she met me with her cordial hand-shake, and pleasant smile, I began to think, 'Well, I do like her after all.' We talked an hour; I saw the inside of her warm, gentle, womanly nature, and I loved her.

"That night I heard her sing Lucia, and although I have

heard music that made me fancy myself only just outside the gates of Paradise, I never listened to anything that equalled Abbott's singing on that occasion. When I set to work to analyze my feelings and the change therein, I found I went to that Monday night performance with my heart chuck full of prejudice, and Eli Perkins' criticisms of eight years before. Emma Abbott can sing, divinely, too, and if there is either in or out of the profession a grander, more unselfish nature than hers, I would like to know where it is."

Mrs. Mary F. Clarke, society editor on one of the San Francisco dailies, comments on Miss Abbott's death as follows: "How little I thought when I last saw her, Emma Abbott was so soon to die. Only a fortnight before I spent an hour, perhaps two, in her room at the Baldwin, and her magnetic presence seemed to win me at once to her side. She told me of her lonely widowhood, and said, 'In three weeks I shall occupy the room where he died.' I suggested to her that to thus foster her grief was a mistake, and urged her to take apartments at another hotel. 'No, no,' said she; 'it will be such a comfort to me to sleep in the room where he last slept, where he wrote his last letter to me, sent me his last kiss, and wrote, 'I will see you soon.'

"Then we talked of her art, and she said, 'I hope within the next four years to rise to the distinction of the world's greatest singer. I have already the best, most thoroughly drilled company. Some of my principals are the best in their line the world affords; my wardrobe is the finest ever worn by mortal woman, and why, in view of the advancement made by me in the use of my voice during the last three years, may I not hope by study and the aid of the best instruction Europe affords, to gain that to which I aspire?'

"There was another side to her nature; the generous, forgiving side. Said she, 'When the critics say unkind things, and sometimes make false statements, too, I analyze them carefully to find something by which I can profit. I sometimes feel like saying to those who write such scathing criticisms,

'You are doing me a great favor and I thank you heartily.'

* * Where will another arise to fill her place? Others may delight the ear with glorious voices, please the eye with powerful acting, fine attire, but those on whose friendship-scroll Emma Abbott's name is written, have met with a loss which will grow heavier as the years go on, and we realize that the cordial welcome, and her loving smile will no more await our coming."

Mr. J. C. Abdill, of Kansas City, writes: "Emma Abbott was a Christian woman, thoroughly conscientious and a living example of the fact that there may be good men and women, even Christian men and women on the stage. I remember well how she used to talk to the young ladies of her company, and exhort them to live in a manner to refute the popular impression that all connected with the stage is impure. She told them what to expect, and I am sure they never forgot that talk or Miss Abbott's influence, either."

The *Salt Lake City Tribune* contains the following beautiful tribute: "It is refreshing to find one whom the plaudits of the people, and the peculiar training of the stage have been powerless to spoil. Such an one was Emma Abbott. She has been petted by royalty, patronized by wealth, the protégé of a millionaire, and the favorite of the Baroness Rothschild, the sunshine of an enviable fame has enwreathed her, and yet withal she has ever been a grateful, considerate, warm-hearted woman, one whose success has always been tempered by memories that lie too deep for tears.

"She possessed one of those sweet, purely-musical voices so rarely heard, and so difficult to describe when heard. It had a sensitive, delicate *timbre*, a flute-like, silvery tone, and a charming individuality. Miss Abbott sang with her mind and soul as much as with the throat. Only when a beautiful voice is united with a highly emotional nature, and carefully cultivated, does the auditor perceive the fire of genius permeating and illuminating rare talent. It was this halo of physical intensity which gave to every tone of the American prima donna its

most irresistible charm. Regarded from a purely critical standpoint, her voice was one of exceptional compass; full and rich in the lower register, pulsing with tenderness and pathos in the middle tones, and as bright, sparkling, and clear, as a rippling stream is the *voce de testa.*"

Frederick N. Peck, of Chicago, pays his tribute to the dead songstress in the following words:

"Like the fragrance of that wealth of flowers which swathed the casket in their plentitude of perfume, and upon the thousands of tearful eyes and aching hearts left sweet impress of memory, so is her voice still a lingering melody; reverberating in the reveries of the popular heart. All that is mortal of the woman will soon be turned to ashes, but Emma Abbott as the persevering girl, the energetic business woman, the accomplished singer, the kind companion and the lonely widow, as the youthful sheaf garnered by death's sickle in its prime, will last long after the silver trappings of the casket which was borne from Music Hall, shall have been tarnished by time.

"How many phases of human life and chararter lay on that bier. The rugged peasant girl who had listened to the tuneful Chimes of Normandy, could, in an imaginative moment, be transformed to a sweet, loving, graceful Virginia, wandering with her Paul. In the Swiss mountain home the penitent Magdalen returns to the parent roof, a moaning Linda. A shift of the scenes, and the Rose of Castile dances with merry music into sight.

"But more than twenty years ago, the plain American people, whose hearts Miss Abbott has since won, did not see the *artiste* in that modest young girl, who, with only a sweet voice, a guitar, and a pure, womanly heart, supplemented by no end of ambition, gave her simple, yet enjoyable concerts wherever she could gain an audience.

"Her earnings she carefully hoarded for future advancement. Her first appearance outside of Illinois was at Grand Rapids, Michigan, in the dining-room of the old Rathbun hotel. The room was filled, twenty-five cents being the admission fee. A



Seth Abbott.

few years ago, Miss Abbott in response to a second encore, at the Grand Rapids theater, made a speech as full of gratitude as it was of remembrance of the encouragement given her as a poor girl. * * * It was her energy that made Emma Abbott what she was, and nerved her to that fatal effort which was her last."

Walter Allen, for many year her stage manager, and to the last a devoted friend, says: "She treated all of her company with the greatest consideration, and told them always to bring their troubles to her. And when they did, they were sure of a listener and sympathetic friend. She had the greatest capacity for work of any one I ever have known. She was the hardest worker in the company, yet when we were all worn out she was as fresh as though she had just had a long rest. She did not change as she grew rich and successful, but always remained the same, and to her we 'boys' who had been so long with her, were always 'boys;' to her we were 'Billy,' 'Walter,' and 'Brod.'

"Women do not exist who are purer than Emma Abbott. There was never a stain on her reputation or character. The critics found fault with her as an *artiste*, because she introduced simple ballads into such operas as Faust. She did this because the people wanted to hear them. She sang what the people wanted, and that is one secret of her success. During our tours through the South, I have known as many as fifty requests to come in on one evening, for 'Last Rose of Summer;' and she always sang it when thus requested, no matter what the opera."

Dora Wilson (Mrs. Walter Allen), of the Lotta company, says of Miss Abbott: "I think no other star was so loved by her company. She was the most democratic of women. Her death was a dreadful shock to us, for we loved her so dearly. She was such a loving, sunny, good-natured soul. Her place will be hard to fill, both on the stage and in society, and with those of us who were in her company, who learned to look upon a day as incomplete, unless we had exchanged a word

with her, and received her greeting, her place can *never be filled.*"

Robert J. Jessup was one of the songstress' most ardent admirers and friends, and being aware of this, the author sent to him a paper containing the advance sheets of the work in hand; receiving in acknowledgment the following letter. Mr. Jessup is at present a member of the *Salt Lake Tribune* editorial corps.

"I received last evening a Minneapolis paper containing a review of your biography of the late Emma Abbott, who fell asleep in this city January 5th last, and so suddenly that her sorrow-stricken family did not realize what was coming until too late for them to reach her bedside. Thank you for the courtesy in sending that paper. I read it with the greatest interest, and will see that my children are supplied with a copy of the Biography when it appears. Every American girl who hopes to make this world the better by having lived in it, and who desires to carve a name for herself in the column of Fame, ought to read the biography of Emma Abbott. There, is surely an example worth following.

"I am glad you are making a feature of Emma's spiritual life, her faith in her Maker and His Son who gave Himself up for us, as the Apostle says, 'that all should not perish, but have everlasting life; as many as would look unto Him and be saved.' Emma's faith, a faith that nothing could overturn and cause to falter, was what carried her safely through the countless temptations that so surround the stage; and the stage was purified and made so much the more respectable for her having trod its boards for twenty years. Her echo of that saying of Job, 'I know that my Redeemer liveth' came very well from a woman of her nobility of character."

CHAPTER XIX.



N a previous chapter Mr. and Mrs. George Hoffman are mentioned among those who first became interested in Miss Abbott, when she visited New York City with a view of taking up her studies there. Among the most beautiful and heartfelt tributes to the singer's worth is a letter written the author on hearing of her relation to the work in hand, by the widow of George Hoffman, Mrs. Sophia Hoffman, who still resides in New York City.

The lady says: "It seems as if I must fly to you to tell you of the dear girl's efforts, and days of hard work after coming to New York, and before the public, which did a little later help lift her toward the goal of her desires. It was my good fortune to see and to know that beautiful inner life, that daily example, pure as purity itself, that patient, uncomplaining endurance of criticism and misfortune, that sunny, happy nature, which required so little of kindness and prosperity to make her forget that a cloud ever existed. Her example should nerve the masses of our young women and girls to higher living and purer thinking.

"It was in my home Emma frequently met the man whom she loved with the same intensity and fervor she did every thing else. There were so many letters, scores of them from

the time she sailed away a stranger, as it were, alone, and going to a land of strangers; from which extracts would interest all, but, alas! never did I dream she would go to the Brighter Land before me, and all, with others, the accumulation of years, have been destroyed.

"Just before sailing, in 1872, she sang at the Horace Greeley birthday reception,

'Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind?'

and one year from that day she learned of the death of that dear, devoted friend. She had been suffering for weeks from nervous prostration, which it was feared might prove ruinous to her voice. Indeed, for several days she had not been able to utter a note, and had been forbidden under any circumstances to try her voice.

"When the news of Mr. Greeley's death reached her, she was almost heart-broken, and falling on her knees she prayed for his family, and then in tones as clear as any she ever uttered, she sang once more the old familiar song, to the memory of that great and good man. 'From this hour, dear Sophie,' she wrote me, 'my voice was restored.' One day when she came in to lunch, she sang out merrily, 'Not a shoestring in my shoe this morning, but I have just sent my dear little mamma a pair of elegant, warm blankets, for how can I enjoy my warm room and bed when I know how cold it is out there on the lake?' Dear, dear Emma; how little I realized as I last looked into her dear face that it was indeed a last farewell.

"I spent several days with her at the Hotel Vendome the fall after her husband's death. We planned a long life, and I urged her to rest for a while from her arduous labors, and said, 'Your husband's death means rest for you, rest and repose for a season at least.' Her reply was, 'Rest on earth, means death for me.'"

A friend in Cleveland writes: "Miss Abbott was charming in conversation, and a talk with her afforded genuine delight. She was an educated, cultured, warm-hearted, generous woman,

with 'charity for all, and malice toward none.' Her straightforward, brilliant career had finally melted the barriers of prejudice and spite, and she stood at the close of her life where a rival American singer vowed she never would stand, on the very pinnacle of success. The rival *artiste* had friends at court, and being a woman, for several years had her way, but she could not forever keep talent in the background. It is a rare and delicate article, but it survives rough usage, and when it emerges from the shadow, shines brightly and gives forth a wonderful light. It seems a mysterious Providence that calls her from a career of such usefulness, and removes from society the example of one so pure and good, but 'His ways are not our ways,' and it may be that she is by her untimely death spared some terrible affliction."

An Atlanta, Ga., gentleman, one of the *Constitution* editorial corps, says in a letter to a friend:

"The first time I met Emma Abbott was soon after her husband's sad death; and she seemed to me a strange, yet beautiful, exponent of the 'Bitter-sweet' of life. In the morning, gowned in a sable robe, her face worn by the flow of tears, as she sat in her luxurious apartments at the hotel; in the evening the embodiment of sunlight and laughter; a brilliant star against the sad background of a sorrowful life.

"She met me with a warm, magnetic hand clasp, and a smile at once divinely sweet, divinely sad.

"'Ah, I have little to tell,' she said, as she lifted her sorrowful eyes to my face. 'The anguish and painful excitement I have undergone would have killed me had I not been constantly absorbed in work. At first I thought it would drive me mad, this going back to the old life, and the old songs with their triumphs and applause. What was applause to me when my heart was breaking?

"'In the first days of my grief I said, 'I cannot sing, I must cancel my engagements,' but the thought came to me, 'What are all the people who depend on me to do? How are they to live, thrown out of their engagements and their salaries

cut off?' They are so good, so considerate, so kind to me; I could not leave them to chance for support. My own suffering made me more sympathetic toward all mankind. I said to my manager, 'Yes, I will go on;' and in two weeks after my husband was buried, I began taking up the old roles again, but I assure you it is very hard.'

"I do not believe the little woman ever recovered from that blow. I saw her a year later, but the traces of sorrow and bereavement were still fresh on her cheeks, and her life seemed still darkened by the loss of her beloved husband."

James H. Colville, a prominent lawyer of Springfield, and a life-long friend of herself and husband, pays to them the following tender tribute: "I never knew a man who so nearly worshipped his wife as did Eugene Wetherell. To men in business matters, and even sometimes in addressing his wife on matters in the line of business, he was brusque and what might be termed hard; but the way his eye lighted up as he saw her come to the footlights to respond to an encore, said plainly to all around him, 'That little woman is my wife, and in her my sun rises and sets.'

"Nor was the devotion all on one side, for Wetherell knew that his wife idolized him; that his coming and going were the rising and setting of her sun. Right justly was he proud of such love, for a purer, more lovable woman never gave her heart in keeping of man. To me it was a marvel how through a stage experience of over twenty years, she so deported herself that not a word of criticism was ever passed on aught pertaining to her, save her artistic work.

"Her reputation as a woman was utterly free from stain. And yet she was no prude. Free in manner and conversation, there was in heart and nature an innate purity and goodness which moulded her whole life.

"Peace to her ashes and may her pure life prove an example, which will be followed by many, and I would that her mantle were as broad as her charity, then might all the women of her profession be protected thereby."

A dear friend on the *Kansas City Times'* corps gives expression to his esteem in the following beautiful words :

"She is dead, but not forgotten. She leaves behind her an artistic void. Success had not taken from her womanliness those elements of sincerity of strength and directness of purpose, of purity of character, which made the people love her. She was true to herself, to her ideals, to the public, throughout a career, the temptations of which must have been many. She triumphed over obstacles that would easily have baffled a less courageous spirit, and by her masterful determination to succeed and to please, did please and did succeed as has no other with her capabilities within an equal sphere. She won, and won well and worthily, artistic honors through sheer energy and unflagging application of the gifts nature gave. The genius of perseverance was hers in the highest degree. Personally lovable, professionally admirable, the little woman has the great tribute of honest tears from all who knew her honest life."

Col. William M. Ferry, of Park City, Utah, tells a little story of the prima donna's early life, or about the time she was giving concerts to raise money to pay for her musical instruction in New York City. Aided by his brother, Edward Ferry (now also a Park City man and member of the Utah legislature), T. Stewart White, of Grand Rapids, and John A. Leggett, of Butte, Montana; all at that time residents of Grand Haven; the colonel succeeded in enlisting the sympathies of the public, announcing that a beautiful young soprano from Peoria was in town, and would sing at Hubbard's hall.

"And when our little Emma, as she was afterward called, made her courtesy on the platform, a sea of three hundred or more faces greeted her. Emma's heart throbbed with delight beneath that neatly-fitting worsted dress, and how those laughing eyes of hers did sparkle! The sight of that audience inspired her; and sing? Well, that audience thought so, until the building shook; and the singer remarked some years afterwards that, even with her European training, she never sang more sweetly than at the Hubbard Hall concert.

"Emma was very happy next day, as the receipts were seventy-five or eighty dollars, and she felt more confidence in herself than before. She left that day for Muskegon, after thanking her quartet of friends for the kindly assistance rendered her. The young soprano entered Muskegon with a *prestige* and she did well there, her treasury being added to by a handsome sum. On her return from Europe, she, remembering her kindly reception in Grand Haven and Muskegon, visited both places with her concert troupe, and was cordially welcomed.

"I did not meet Miss Abbott again until 1884, when I came down to Salt Lake from Park City on purpose to see her, and called at the Walker house, where she was stopping. In the course of conversation she inquired if my wife was with me, to which I replied in the negative, but that she might be down during the engagement. 'Let me know if she comes,' said the prima donna, 'and I will sing "Last Rose of Summer" on purpose for her.' Mrs. Ferry did not appear, but the beautiful song was rendered for me, and I shall never forget it."

Editor Thomas, of the *American Art Journal* says: "Emma Abbott was a remarkably gifted woman in many ways. She felt that she was destined for the stage, and after repeated misfortunes, finally won her way to a fame vouchsafed to no other American singer. Her success was due to her quick intelligence, the possession of a warm and impulsive nature, that won and held friends, unbounded energy, faith in her ability to accomplish anything she undertook, a mastery of details, aud a will power that bent all opposition, while her earnest enthusiasm and never-failing pluck won for her the admiration of the public.

"She was one of the most powerful illustrations of the American saying that, 'Nothing succeeds like success.' Emma Abbott fulfilled her every engagement. Her word was as strong as her bond with managers and *artistes*, and she earned the *sobriquet* of 'Honest little Emma,' the country over.

"So, after an eventful early life, she closes a career which fully compensated her for her privations and struggles. Her ambitions were realized by sheer force of her intellectual gifts,



Fred M. Abbott.

exercised according to her lights. She leaves an unsullied reputation; and her example of a heroic struggle to succeed in life, will be an inspiration to thousands of American women, who are attempting to solve the bread-winning problem."

Mrs. E. A. Forbes, of New Orleans, Louisiana, and Miss Abbott became acquainted at Milan, Italy, in 1872, and the friendship there formed was continued until cancelled by the singer's death. In the summer of '88 the friends met in Paris, and spent many hours in riding, talking over the times bygone, and the struggles of each.

Mrs. Forbes pays this tribute to her dead friend. "The news of dear Emma's death came like a thunderclap at noonday. Being in the country on a visit, I had not even heard she was ill, and the very morning of my departure for home had exacted from my sister a promise to spend the 'New Orleans Abbott season' with me. On reaching home I found a telegram from my husband who was in Ogden, saying 'Emma Abbott died at Salt Lake this morning.' What a flood of memories rushed over me. I could see her again, a fair-haired, blue-eyed girl of frail physique, and a face as innocent as that of a baby. I recalled our conversations, and in fancy I heard her say again as of yore, 'Nell, will I ever become a great singer?' then we would roam away in the fields of imagination and she would say, 'Will it not be queer if I ever am a famous singer, and you will come to listen to me and my company? *The Abbott Company!* doesn't that sound grand? May be it will be so. Every one has to have a beginning, and humble ones make the best endings, it is said. Of course I am here to make a singer of myself, and I certainly hope some day to be a famous one, but, oh! Nell, it's such a long way off, and then if I should fail, and disappoint my dear, good friends who have done, and are doing so much for me, would that not be terrible?' and she would lay her head on my shoulder and cry.

"Now she is gone in the prime of life, and although she has attained so much, I, as a personal friend, know that some of her fondest hopes are still unfulfilled. She has talked with me

for hours of her intention to build a home and school for young and ambitious *artistes*, who, like herself when she began, lack means to prosecute their studies. The last time we talked of it was in Paris, the summer before her husband's death, and she said, 'In a few years more I shall have enough to fulfil my plans. I want it done during my lifetime, that I may supervise it myself, and when I retire (for I certainly shall retire before my voice begins in the least to break), I will take solid comfort in visiting the institution and giving young students encouragement.'

"Poor girl! she did 'retire' while yet her voice was at its best, if indeed it had reached the limit of its possibilities, but her fond hope, to help others of her profession, is not carried out. And yet by the terms of her will she has shown her wonderfully liberal, charitable disposition, and hundreds will 'rise up and call her blessed.' * * *

"On all this continent there have been but two who have shown a disposition to publicly rob her of the place she has won and will ever hold in the hearts of the American people. One of these is a Kansas City minister, the other a journalist named, J. Travis Quigg.

The former, in a sermon soon after the death of Miss Abbott, abused her because she did not leave her money to her profession, forgetting to mention the fact that she left forty-five thousand dollars to the churches where she had enjoyed services. The other attacked her through the columns of the *American Musician.* Of this latter attack C. M. Jackson says in the *Salt Lake Tribune:*

"In the far-away land across the sea there is a beast which lurks in jungles dark, by day shrinking from contact with anything that lives. But at night, when skies are somber and the black clouds lower, when all nature is hushed in sleep, this hideous monster runs rampant, and prowling forth with silent footfall seeks its prey by violating the graves of the dead.

"There is in New York City a man—at least that is what naturalists define creatures of his species—who in days gone

by doubtless achieved fame as a clarionet player in a French variety orchestra. He is at present engaged in writing stuff for a journal yclept *The American Musician.* He signs himself J. Travis Quigg. Prior to this time he has remained in comparative obscurity, save when the gallery gods bestowed upon him an encore for his solo.

"In many respects J. Travis Quigg is not unlike the beast mentioned. For the purpose of achieving a little notoriety he has invaded the sanctuary of death, and, under the protection of a false motive, ascribed by himself, assails the memory of the prima donna who died in this city on January 6. Before the last breath has escaped from the trembling lip; ere the echoes of the fluttering sigh have died away in the chamber of death; while yet the tears are falling from the eyes of those who loved her, this ghoul in his raw-head-and-bloody-bones style violates the sanctity of eternity's anteroom, and with ruthless hand snatches the object of his dislike from the sacred couch where undisturbed she should have slept, and holds her up before the world as an object of contempt, a thing he dared not do when she was alive.

"'Sometimes it is necessary for the good of the living to speak the truth,' says this desecrator of sepulchres. 'Even though the mantle of charity were stretched to the breaking point it could not be made to cover Abbott as an artist. She was not only not an artist, but her financial success was a positive detriment to art. The means that she employed to push herself forward were not legitimate, and the schemes adopted to advertise herself were equally objectionable. In a word, Emma Abbott was the product of the wild and woolly West, and could not possibly have been a success outside the United States.

"So Abbott was not an artist? And she was a 'positive detriment' to art? Well, the people of this country have been wonderfully mistaken in their judgment all these years. For, outside the city of New York, the prevailing opinion has been that Emma Abbott was an artist, but a woman of ability in her

grade or class, who never aspired to greater heights than nature fitted her.

"We may or may not call it art. That makes but little difference. 'That which we call a rose, by any other name would smell as sweet.' Be it as it may, Emma Abbott had one faculty. She could sing in such a way as to cause the smile of mirth to illumine the face of the listener one moment, and the tear of sympathy to dim the eye the next. She had many moods, and some way her audiences were always in sympathy with each and every one. This may not be art, and may not be appreciated by the orchestra artists of New York City, but it seemed to please in other places.

"Perhaps she might not have been a success outside the United States. It matters little whether she would or not. She was nothing if not American. She never aspired to be anything but what she was, what she lived and died—a womanly woman, who, knowing her own ability, never sought to exaggerate it.

"'Only time and increasing intelligence can eradicate Abbott opera,' says this despoiler of cemeteries. If it is to be eradicated, let time cease; let mankind retrograde instead of advance. Let every singer become an Abbott; the world will be the better for it.

"'She was a product of the wild and woolly West,' says this man; and we are glad of it. Would that we had more of them to sing the songs she sang. The West is to be congratulated, for it has produced a singer whose popularity has never been equaled, much less excelled, barring, of course, the fact that she never claimed for herself the topmost round of the ladder. * * *

"Poor little Emma. There never was a woman of whom America might be more proud. She loved her country and her friends, she loved her womanhood and defended it at all times, and this alone should be sufficient to entitle her to protection from the assaults of grave robbers. Would that she could forsake the voiceless silence of the tomb long enough to speak a

few words to the animal who seeks, after death, to besmirch that which he dared not assail in life."

The *Chicago Tribune* of January 14, '91, printed an interview with several members of the dramatic profession, some of whom seemed to feel that their profession should have been remembered in her will; others arguing from the very sensible standpoint that "Abbott's money was her own, and she had a legal and moral right to spend it as she chose."

The report was also published that all her beautiful wardrobe was by her order, burned. The sister of the singer, Mrs. Lizzie Abbott Clark, replied to the articles in question, and her letter is published complete. This should forever silence those who would criticise the prima donna for failure to remember by bequest either the members of her company, or her profession.

"Kindly allow me to correct through the columns of your paper a report to the effect that, acting upon my sister's dying request, her maid, immediately after her decease, burned up all of Emma Abbott's elegant costumes, including a sealskin cloak, etc., at Hotel Templeton, Salt Lake City, Utah. This report is entirely erroneous; but for the benefit of friends of dear Emma and of the family I wish to state the facts as they are, viz.: the physicians knowing there is danger of contagion from germs remaining in the clothing worn by pneumonia patients, recommended that my sister's clothing, worn during her last illness, also the linen from her bed, be burned, which was done at once; but no part of her beautiful wardrobe was burned, nor was it her desire to have them destroyed, as, in her will she bequeaths all her wardrobe, both stage and private, to me. The family would like to have the press of the country generally copy this letter, as the report referred to appeared in the newspapers in various cities.

"I cannot refrain from adding a few lines in reference to what seems to me a gross injustice to the memory of my deceased sister. It is the only unkind thing I have read of her since her sudden and untimely death. In the *Tribune* of January 14, 1891, appeared an article entitled 'Forgot Her Profession,'

in which various theatrical people then playing in the local theaters criticised Emma sharply because she made no provision for the members of her company and no bequest to the Actors' Fund, etc. To the latter I have nothing to reply; but in regard to her being indifferent to her company, I personally know she was always more than kind—aiding them with money and encouragement during illness, and in all her seasons on the road no Saturday ever passed that she did not pay the salary of every member in full, and often an advance when necessary. Had she known death would come so soon, I feel positive she would have made provision for each member of her company, but she expected to live many years before retiring from the stage, and as changes occurred in the company each season she would have had to make a new will every year in order to remember them properly. Then, again, the statement that she called her company to her bedside the Sunday night before her death and told them they would be provided for, is utterly without foundation. She was scarcely able to speak, could only with difficulty gasp a few words, and was so ill and partially unconscious from weakness and the opiates administered to her, that she was not able to articulate any message of farewell even to her family, nearly two thousand miles away, whose hearts were breaking over the sad news of her approaching end. Pardon me for taking up so much of your space, but I feel that with all the beautiful tributes your paper and the press generally have paid Emma, you will gladly allow an injustice done to her memory, to be righted.

LIZZIE ABBOTT CLARK.

Those who know her personal love for the members of her company, feel assured that had Miss Abbott had days instead of hours to prepare for the end; or had she during those few last hours been free from excruciating suffering, or the influence of opiates, given to afford relief from her terrible agony, she would have left every member of that company in comparative comfort during the rest of the season. But when her 'dear old father,' and 'precious mother,' were provided for, her

strength was gone, and she fell back on her pillow exhausted. Not that Miss Abbott was indebted to her company. Their salaries were always paid in full, but she who had put aside personal feeling in remembering them; who when her own heart revolted at the 'old songs, the old scenes, the glare of the footlights, and applause of the crowds, and longed for retirement, seclusion, and rest,' had said: 'I will not think of myself, but of these people; they must not be cast adrift in mid-winter,' would never have allowed the very event to occur for which she made that heart-breaking sacrifice, had not disease rendered her powerless.

The members of the company know this, and it is safe to assert that not one has harbored an unkind thought or spoken an ungenerous word of their loved leader. They realized, as the outside world will never realize, that the end began that *New Year's Eve*, when for the last time they heard her voice in song. They were unprovided for, other than transportation to New York and intermediate points, but this fact does not reflect in the least upon Miss Abbott. Had the precedent established by her generous act, when Mr. Wetherell died, been followed, Manager Pratt might have been a few hundreds poorer in purse, but a thousandfold richer in the esteem of grateful hearts.

CHAPTER XX.

"Sweet as a Day in June."

THERE are days and days; some characterized by chilling blasts and lowering skies, from which all nature seems to shrink; there are April days, half sun, half shadow, half smiles, half tears; cold December days, when all is locked in ice and snow; and dreary October days, when from the rising to the setting of the sun winds moan and sigh, and the rain beats pitilessly upon the wrecks of beautiful Summer, that lie everywhere in view.

So there are hearts and hearts. Some like the April day, that smile through tears, and weep through smiles; some so cold that no phase of suffering or woe can penetrate their frigid depths; and yet others, who weep and sigh their lives away, complaining that their burden is heavier than they can bear. And there are hearts like a day in June; whose sunshine penetrates the nooks and alleyways of life, and whose influences, like the perfume of flowers and carols of birds, gladden all around.

Such a heart was Emma Abbott's. Those who came into her presence were cheered. No matter what her own grief, she had words of sympathy and consolation for the sorrows of her friends. From her earliest childhood she displayed the warm heart and sympathetic nature which, in later years, prompted



H. C. and Lizzie Abbott Clark.

the annual expenditure of thousands of dollars in helping others. She had been poor in purse, but was always rich in sympathy and generous impulses, like those which impelled her in her will, to provide first for her family, and a few dear friends; then set aside many thousands for the public, and best organized charities of the city she called home.

Her hopefulness was infectious. No matter how gloomy one might feel, or what the cause of one's sadness, an hour with her was like getting out of a chilly, damp air, into the warm sunlight. Before her joyous laugh, her witty speech, and her affectionate manner, all dark hours were forgotten.

To this phase of her character her husband attributed much of his success. He once said to me, "The reason we get along so well is that Emma never gets blue, or down-hearted, when I am. Sometimes she worries, as all women do, but if things go wrong with me, let her once find it out, and when I come in her presence she will meet me with one of those sunny smiles, before which nothing can stand. All at once my own load is gone, and for my life, I couldn't say where."

Her faith in men and women made those with whom she came in contact, better. Even those whose disposition would have tended to treachery were made honest in their dealings with her, by the knowledge that she trusted them. As every additional sin makes men and women lower, so each good deed, each ray of truth that enters the heart, lifts them up toward heaven.

Emma Abbott contended that all who are better for one hour are one hour's march nearer the goal of all good. So said she; "If I can make a man respect himself for one day, self respect is ever afterward easier for him."

Every member of the company felt this elevating influence, and to her high standard of moral character, the company, collectively and individually, are greatly indebted for the reputation they bear.

Miss Abbott's business tact was a marvel to all who met her, and although many fancied that to Mr. Wetherell's financeering

they owed their rapidly accumulated, and immense fortune, the business methods employed by her subsequent to his death, proved her every inch his peer.

She seemed to be able to detect at once a winning investment, and so prophetic did her words often prove, that some of the superstitious ones credited her with the power of bestowing luck, and a common expression among members of the company was "Miss Abbott's hand brings luck."

To the world at large the fact that her fortune increased so rapidly may have betokened a love of money, in the ordinary meaning of the term, but Miss Abbott loved money for the good it helped her to do. True, she liked luxurious living, and the dainty appointments which wealth can furnish, but more than these she enjoyed the gratitude of such as were provided with the same by means of her generosity.

Emma Abbott's self-confidence and self-reliance never approached egotism, with her it was not "Because I can," but, "Because I will," do so. She believed in her own powers after she had given sufficient cultivation to accomplish that which she desired, and I am proud to record the fact that she seldom disappointed herself or others.

Miss Abbott was noted for her habits of industry. A more indefatigable worker there could not be. Study, business, attendance upon rehearsals, with her usual night performances, the formation of plans, filled almost every hour during her regular seasons, and a history of the manner in which her vacations were spent, appears elsewhere.

I knew her first when a girl, she was singing in concerts through central Illinois, with always the same object in view, that of becoming a prima donna. Even then her love for her father, who accompanied her, and for the loved ones at home, won the admiration of those who formed her acquaintance. She never uttered the name of one of her family, father, mother, brother or sister, without a prefix of endearment. It was, "dear papa," "my darling little mamma," "my blessed sister," and "my noble brother."

In the days of her study in New York, she sang often for charity entertainments, saying, "I am poor myself, and I am always willing to assist others." In a letter before me is the description of a concert given at the home of Mrs. George Hoffman, in 1871, for the benefit of the "Chapin Charity Fund." Mrs. Hoffman had met her, and, being charmed by her voice and ingenuousness, invited her to sing for this charity at her home. From the date of that concert her success seemed assured.

The hours spent in her society were those of profit for me. Every hour I learned some lesson of hope, of faith, of charity or unselfishness. None were so bad, but in their lives she found some redeeming quality.

Often I have heard her say, "We are all the children of God's hand, and none of His work is without some good; something which, under proper influence, would redeem the evil."

In recalling the downfall of one of the profession, she said, "I must not chide, I must not judge; for only God knows the manifold temptations that poor soul may have overcome. There are temptations before which my own strength becomes weakness, and were it not that I was taught by my blessed mother to pray, 'Deliver me from evil,' I, too, might have fallen long ago. I never think of this, but I say, 'Perhaps she had no mother to teach her where to go for strength in the hour of temptation.'" Many of the singer's generous deeds are recorded in this volume, but there are scores of others of which I am cognizant, which I am not at liberty to mention. To do so would trespass beyond the bounds of sacred confidence.

But brighter than all else, overshadowing sympathy, charity, generosity, and even her artistic excellence, does her guileless life, her unsullied reputation, shine forth, saying to professional aspirants, "There are in our life no temptations which may not with divine assistance be overcome; no Christian graces which we may not display." * * *

My task, a sweet but sad one, is almost done. Begun at her own request, and with her own assistance, it promised to be a delightful occupation, but, alas! it has twice been stopped by death; first that of her beloved husband, and she said: "I cannot go on with it, the recollections are too sad;" therefore it was laid aside until the autumn of 1890, when, at Miss Abbott's suggestion, the few lines which had been written were brought out, and the threads of history tied anew. Her last engagement in Minneapolis was, she told me, the busiest of her whole life. Preparations and rehearsals for Anne Boleyn occupied nearly the entire day, and we talked of the work in hand by snatches only. The day of her departure she said to me, "Go ahead, do your best; and when I return to the East we will complete it."

She looked so happy that day, attired in a neatly fitting gown of black brocade velvet with demi-traine, Lord Fauntleroy collar and cuffs, her red-brown hair in rings all over her head. She looked up as I entered with, "How glad I am you have come, I feared you might be ill, and I wouldn't get to see you."

She talked of our plans for her biography, of her father, and said, "As he grows older, I realize more and more that I shall soon be denied the privilege of meeting him when I come to Minneapolis."

I could but wonder as I talked with her, at her marvellous vivaciousness. Although the week had been such a hard one, she seemed as fresh as though she had just ended a seven-day's rest.

There are those who maintain that last meetings are always characterized by presentiments. Who could have divined then that she, with her glorious voice, her wonderful vitality, her cheerful spirit, was so near the end? I confidently expected to meet her again, and counted the weeks and days until her Eastern "bookings" would throw us together for a time.

From points along her western route I learned of her extraordinary success. I read press notices, and the tributes of friends to her greatly improved quality of voice, and dramatic power.



Leon Abbott.

Then came telegrams announcing her indisposition, her serious illness; and all day on Sunday, January 4, I trembled lest I hear that she was gone.

Monday morning, soon after I arose, the sad message came, and I realized that a friendship which was more than friendship, a sentiment which partook of sisterly love, which was characterized by implicit trust and confidence on both sides, was broken. That the assurance which she never failed to express when we met, "My dear, I do love you, and I'm sure you know it," had been given me for the last time. I read again and again the words "Emma Abbott died at Hotel Templeton this morning," ere I could realize that the dearest friend I had outside my own family, was gone forever. * * *

On the altar of love I place this humble tribute to her noble life; a partial record of its generous deeds and self-sacrificing impulses. Another might perchance have woven them in more pleasing manner, but none could have been impelled by tenderer love; for on the stage she was my ideal artist, in the seclusion of her room, when, with all the world shut out, we talked alone of our hopes and plans, she was my sympathizing, loving sister; at all times, in all places, and under all conditions, a true, devoted friend.

S. E. M.

APPENDIX.

DYER ABBOTT was born on June 18, 1778, and when about thirty-one years of age was wedded to Sarah Atkinson, daughter of Benjamin Atkinson, of Boscawen, New Hampshire. During their early married life the young couple kept a small tavern in Concord, where Mr. Abbott was director of the old South Church choir. When the war of 1812 broke out, Mr. Abbott was commissioned as Fife Major, and shortly after removed his family to Henniker, a village sixteen miles west of Concord. Mr. and Mrs. Dyer Abbott were the parents of twelve children, three of whom are still living, Mrs. Maria Messenger, of Rochester, N. Y., now eighty years of age; Seth Abbott, aged seventy-four; and Francis B. Abbott, of Chicago.

The Abbotts of that generation were possessed of much musical taste and talent, and although there were few musical academies, were well educated in the theory of music, and skillful manipulators of the popular instruments of that time, and excellent singers. Dyer Abbott taught several classes in his neighborhood, and gave the members of his own family the benefit of the best musical teaching the time and locality afforded.

His daughter, Maria, was noted for her bird-like soprano voice, and was the leading singer in Lowell Mason's Boston Academy of Music. She appeared in many concerts, both in Boston and Lowell, under direction of Ostinella and other noted leaders. Braham, of London, whom she assisted at several concerts in the larger cities pronounced her the most accomplished American vocalist of her time.

Seth, the father of Emma Abbott, was a puny infant, and his family little thought he would live to manhood's years. When four months old the family pronounced his lamp of life as nearly extinct; and in accordance with the custom of the time, the neighbors and pastor of the church, Rev. Mr. Sawyer, were summoned to attend the baptism of the dying baby. The minister opened the family Bi-

ble with the remark, "As he will be short-lived we will give him a short name," and turning from page to page selected *Seth.* To the reviving influence of the water, Mr. Abbott attributes his recovery, and still holds in his heart a warm place for Rev. Mr. Sawyer. Of nearly forty persons present on that occasion, only Mrs. Messenger and Mr. Seth Abbott are living.

At an early age the boy displayed the musical taste and talent of the family, as well as decided mathematical genius. When nine years of age he sang all the odes of the Masonic fraternity, and often accompanied his father to public celebrations and installations in neighboring towns. He gave much attention to the study of music, attending classes in the winter season. Among his teachers was Leonard Marshall, since a teacher and publisher in Boston.

At that time evening spelling schools were the principal entertainment for the children, and were held once each week. On these occasions it was customary after spelling was concluded to propound catch questions, and the one who gave the correct answer was accorded the privilege of asking the succeeding question. On one occasion having answered correctly a question in geography, Seth asked, "What noted Hill in New Hampshire?" As no answer was forthcoming the questioner replied to himself; "Isaac Hill," and created quite a laugh, Isaac Hill being a noted politician of the time. This paved the way for another question by the boy, which was, "What is one-third of one hundred millions?" This was too much for the mental capacity of the young folks, and Seth answered again, thus capturing the prize of the evening.

The next week Isaac Hill's paper, *The New Hampshire Patriot,* contained an account of the exercises of the spelling school at Henniker, and Seth's geographical pun was given much prominence.

In 1829 Gen. Andrew Jackson visited Concord, and young Abbott with six associates, who were admirers of the hero's reputation, decided to visit the state capital on that occasion, even though compelled to walk the entire distance of sixteen miles. They started long before daylight, and on arriving there met Col. Woods of their own town. This gentleman took young Abbott to the sanctum of the *Patriot,* which was presided over by Governor Isaac Hill, and introduced him as the wag of the Henniker spelling school. The boy was welcomed by Mr. Hill and presented with a pocketful of sixpenny, shilling, and twenty-cent, silver coins.

Gov. Hill also ordered dinner for young Abbott and himself at the leading hotel of the town, where they sat at table with Judge Darling and other notables. Gen. Jackson did not make his appearance on the streets until a late hour, and arrived just in time to divert at-



George Abbott and Family.

tention from the Abbott youth, whose fame had spread among the boys of the town, and they fairly mobbed him with their attentions.

In 1833 young Abbott attended singing school in Lowell, and took lessons on the violin. He also was set at work as an apprentice in a machine shop with his brothers, John, and Francis. Both of the latter became first-class machinists, but Seth had music in his soul, and music on the brain, and no love for the shop. The next year he learned to play the French horn and Canopean. Having a desire to see the world, he bethought himself of a life at sea. He had saved something more than a hundred dollars, and was induced by the captain of a fishing vessel to invest one hundred in a share of the same. It was an off year for fishing, and after cruising about for some months with indifferent success, young Abbott applied for his discharge, which was given him. The experience proved a dear one as he recovered but five of the hundred dollars he had invested in the vessel. It proved a sufficient one for the boy, and he turned again to his music with more enthusiasm than before.

In 1838, having taken a course of music in Boston under Lowell Mason, and received a diploma from that noted gentleman, Mr. Abbott, who had then arrived at the dignity of manhood, began teaching vocal music in Lowell, Massachusetts, with a class of three hundred and fifty pupils; also led the choir of Rev. Mr. Horton's church, of the same city. The choir was accompanied by an excellent orchestra under the direction of Isaac Robinson.

The band was composed of twelve players and two vocalists, eight of whom were paid large salaries. To meet the expense incurred, the Handel and Hayden society of Lowell volunteered the assistance of its two hundred members. After paying all salaries and the expense of the concert, two hundred dollars remained in the treasury. The society gave concerts in a number of the adjacent towns with great success. Mrs. John Hutchinson, of the noted Hutchinson family, was a member of this society.

At the close of the year 1839 Mr. Abbott went to Rochester, New York, and became a member of Capt. Cheshire's brass band, also taught vocal classes in that city. During the year 1840, in the "Tippecanoe and Tyler, too," campaign, the Cheshire band played at Democratic mass meetings in almost every town and city in western New York. The following winter six of the musicians (including Seth Abbott) were selected to play at Hart's Garden in Buffalo.

In the spring of 1841 Mr. Abbott, with his own orchestra, made a season engagement to play on a steamer on Lake Erie, commanded by Captain Whittaker, stopping at all points on the lake between Buffalo and Detroit.

After this time Mr. Abbott was a member of an orchestra and taught continuously until 1842, when he was married at Woodstock, Vermont, to Almira Palmer, daughter of Dr. Galen Palmer, of that place. Miss Palmer was one of the leading young ladies of the town, and an excellent singer. After his marriage Mr. Abbott engaged in the mercantile business (often teaching evening classes), until 1848, when he with relatives started West.

His first music teaching in the West was on the Rock River circuit, in the towns of Rockford, Freeport, Elgin, and other smaller, but live towns. There were no railroads in the country, and he was compelled to make his rounds in a buggy. In those days people were more socially inclined than now, and men, women and children would walk and drive miles to attend singing school.

At Freeport on the first night the court house was packed to the doors. Hon. Thomas J. Turner, a pioneer of that city, headed the subscription to the class fund with ten dollars. Nearly all the merchants and lawyers of the town gave the same. The programs for those entertainments would to-day do credit to any city. There were at that time few entertainments of any kind, and all being thoroughly democratic entered into whatever they undertook with a will. Freeport was at that time the most musical town west of Chicago. The eldest son of Mr. and Mrs. Abbott died while the family was at Rochester, and was buried in Mt. Hope cemetery. The second child, George, was born at Grand De Tour. At the age of fifteen George played the violin with much skill, and led an orchestra at Peoria. In later years he became quite a noted soloist. Soon after the birth of George, the family moved to Chicago, where Mr. Abbott taught classes on the North, South, and West sides. At that time there was but one other music teacher of note in the city, Frank Lombard, who with his wife gave some excellent concerts, Mrs. Lombard being an excellent soloist. Mr. Lombard was considered the finest campaign singer in the West. In 1850 two other teachers came to Chicago, Messrs. Hillis and Dye, the former noted as a vocal and instrumental instructor, and a great basso; the latter a highly successful teacher of juvenile classes.

On the 9th of December, 1850, Emma Abbott, the afterward famous prima donna, was born. That night Mr. Abbott gave a concert at Market Hall, on State street between Lake and Randolph. The singers on that occasion were Messrs. Frank Lombard, Hillis and Johnson, Miss Hall (the finest soprano in the city), who afterward became Mrs. Hillis, and Mrs. Reynolds, of London, who was the most accomplished vocalist that had at that time visited Chicago. The concert was an artistic and financial success.

In 1852 the cholera made its second appearance in Chicago, and the Abbott family for security moved to St. Charles. Mr. Abbott taught classes in St. Charles and adjoining towns, and had at the same time an urgent request to take classes in Galesburg and Monmouth.

In 1853 Mr. Abbott was called to Peoria to teach vocal music, and take charge of the First Baptist choir of that city, and here Emma remained until fourteen years of age, when she joined a travelling concert company. At the age of seven she took instruction on the guitar, and in little more than a year became an excellent player. After she was nine she played and sang in concerts each year for a season of three months, until twelve years of age. Her father and brother George sang with her, the latter playing the violin. When he was twelve, and Emma ten years of age, they sang the duet "Hear me, Norma," and Emma sang "Merry Zingara" and "Il Bacio." At this time she had had no vocal instruction other than that given by her father.

Emma's concert debut was made at Edward's school-house near Peoria, at nine years of age. The concert was given at the request of the coal miners of the district, and was a financial as well as artistic success. When Mr. Abbott and Emma arrived, the school-house was crowded, and five hundred persons waited on the outside anxious to obtain a glimpse of the embryo star, even though they were unable to hear her sing. No price of admission had been fixed, but the honest-hearted miners volunteered a collection which averaged twenty-five cents for every person in attendance.

The doors were opened and windows raised, so that those on the outside might catch something of the melody of guitar, violin, and the sweet young voice that gladdened the hearts within. At the close of the concert hundreds, who had not been able to gain an entrance, crowded about the Abbott carriage to pay their quarter for the entertainment, declaring that they had received many times the value of the donation in enjoyment.

The story of the Edward school-house concert has been told again and again, but the star of the occasion has been represented as walking many miles in bare feet and shabby attire to the scene of the entertainment. This version is as absolutely false as are all other stories of the extreme poverty of the Abbott family at that or any other time. But for these falsehoods this appendix to the "Life of Emma Abbott" would never have been written. Justice, however, to the family, and particularly to Emma's father, Seth Abbott, demands that the true standing of the family at that time be explained. This explanation is given with the hope of forever silencing three classes of persons. First, those who through a misconceived admiration for

the gifted singer, seem to feel that the lower they place Emma during the years of her childhood, the grander does her character appear; second, those who being anxious to make a display of assumed knowledge, tell truth and falsehood indiscriminately; third, the few who have assurance to claim credit for Emma's early teaching, and who assume to have given her her start in music, etc.

There are those who are sufficiently unscrupulous to assert that, but for their teaching, Emma Abbott would never have risen to dignity "greater than that of a ballad-singer." It is unreasonable to suppose that Emma would study under any other teacher than her father while he was making vocal instruction his principal vocation, and attaining, wherever he taught, the highest possible success. In fact she had with one exception, Mozart of Chicago, no other teacher until she studied under Errani in New York City.

In 1874 Mr. Abbott taught music and gave several concerts in Washington. In 1876 he led a very successful class in Baltimore. In 1878 he moved to Minneapolis, where he still resides. During his residence there Mr. Abbott has platted five additions to the city, two of which, Emma Abbott Park and Mendelssohn, are among the finest suburbs. Had Miss Abbott lived, she would have joined her father in making of the addition bearing her name a real park, with beautiful trees, flowers, and streams of water, a place where the citizens of Minneapolis might resort, and enjoy as her gift, pure air and charming surroundings.

This was one of her favorite and latest plans, and only a month previous to her last visit she had written her father as follows:

"You know my plans for Emma Abbott Park, and when I come to Minneapolis you must take me out there, and we will plan together to make it one of the most beautiful of all the city's parks.

"If you wish to do a little something, you may direct the work. I intend to make of that tract a spot which will be a credit to the city, to myself, and to you, who have spent so many hours of hard labor in platting and improving it."

Besides these suburbs he has made many heavy deals in real estate, and but for a too liberal patronage of lawyers might to-day be one of Minneapolis' wealthiest citizens. The stories of his shiftlessness should be silenced by the statement that the gentleman's credit has enabled him to borrow large sums of money of Minneapolis capitalists, all of whom have been fully paid or are amply secured.

The members of Emma Abbott's family now living are her father and mother, Seth and Almira Abbott; Leon Abbott and family, of Waukesha, Wisconsin; Fred M. Abbott, of Chicago, and Mrs. Lizzie Abbott Clark, of Chicago. Of nieces and nephews there are six.

Eugene F. and Charlotte E., children of George and Alice Abbott; Emma A., Samuel I., Kennedy J., and Willie S., children of Leon Abbott, all of Waukesha.

A brother, George Abbott, whose death four years preceding her own was a terrible blow to the singer, resided in Waukesha, where his widow, Alice Abbott Jones, with his children, still make their home. Mrs. Jones is a highly accomplished pianist, as also is Mrs. Clark, Emma's only sister. The latter has a charming mezzo soprano voice, which may yet be heard on the concert stage. Fred M. Abbott is also a musician, and a member of one of the finest string orchestras in the city of Chicago.

After reading the musical record of the Abbott family for three generations, one can but exclaim: "No wonder Emma Abbott could sing like a Nightingale. Indeed, how could she help it?"

THE WETHERELL MONUMENT.

* * * For a year preceding her death, Miss Abbott had studied designs and plans for a monument to the memory of her husband. It was her desire to erect one of the most expensive, perhaps the costliest monument in the United States, dedicated to the memory of a private individual.

She desired also that the designs should incorporate a number of her favorite fancies, as well as those of her husband, besides several ideas of musical significance.

The peculiar ideas of the dead singer in regard to cremation led to considerable discussion regarding plans. Her first idea was that of an immense silver urn, the bottom of which was to be imbedded in a block of granite, which should stand in the center of the monument under a canopy. This was to remain unsealed until her own death when after receiving her ashes it was to be sealed and made secure.

The same fear of human ghouls and grave robbers which led her to require that her body be cremated, caused the abandonment of this plan, and the adoption of the one which is now in process of consummation.

The design furnished Miss Abbott was prepared by Messrs. Reinhalter & Co., of Philadelphia, and is a combination of six original designs submitted to her, and the ideas furnished them by her. The monument is to be placed in Oak Grove Cemetry, at Gloucester, Massachusetts, where Mr. Wetherell is interred, and where the ashes of the singer will repose.

It is composed of Quincy and eastern granite, and rises to a height of sixty feet. From each corner of a triangular base of fifteen feet, approached by five steps on each side, rises a curious triple column. A carved canopy covers this, forming an open pavillion; above it

rise two similar structures of smaller size, gradually tapering toward the top, which is surmounted by a finial. Pinnacles rise from every corner, with smaller ornaments similar to that at the top. On the front, just over the entrance, is the inscription, "In Loving Memory of Eugene Wetherell." These words with the modest carving, "Emma Abbott Wetherell," on a slab in the floor covering the remains of the singer, are the only characters graven on the monument.

Before going to Paris in the summer of 1890 Miss Abbott obtained photographs of the six designs which had been prepared, and fastened them on the ceiling of her berth on the steamer for the purpose of deciding upon a happy combination, as she was in the habit of choosing her stage costumes. While in Europe she greatly admired the carving executed by old Italian masters on the celebrated Dromo Cathedral, at Milan, and secured an immense photograph of the building, which she placed in her designer's hands. From this was planned the carving on the monument, which is extremely elaborate and costly. The idea of trios, quintettes and septettes, on which she dwelt with peculiar emphasis, is carried out in everything, and it is expected, when completed the memorial will fulfil her expectation that it would be the finest erected to any individual in this country.

